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LORD MACAULAY

LIFE OF JOHNSON AND ESSAY ON ADDISON

LONGMANS' ENGLISH CLASSICS

Edited by GEORGE RICE CARPENTER, A.B.,

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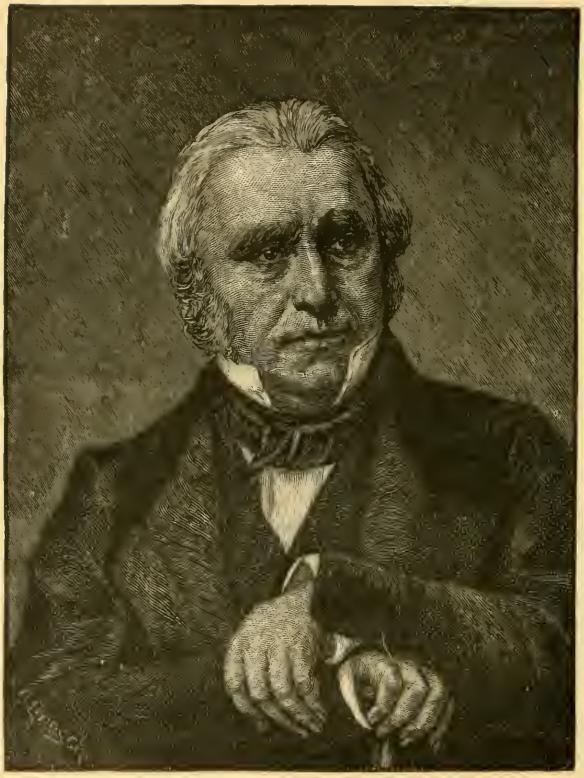
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THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

(After a photograph by Claudet)

Longmans' English Classics

MACAULAY'S
LIFE OF JOHNSON
AND
ESSAY ON ADDISON

EDITED

WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTIONS

BY

HUBER GRAY BUEHLER, A.M.
ENGLISH MASTER AT THE HOTCHKISS SCHOOL

AND

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: PAGE

I. MACAULAY'S LIFE AND WORKS ix

II. MACAULAY'S STYLE AND GENIUS xxiv

III. MACAULAY ON JOHNSON xxxiii

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS xxxvi

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS xliv

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—MACAULAY xlvi

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—JOHNSON li

LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON 1

EXPLANATORY NOTES 45

CRITICAL NOTE 65

INTRODUCTION

I. Macaulay's Life and Works.[1]

Thomas Babington Macaulay, the most popular English essayist of the nineteenth century, and also a distinguished orator, statesman, and historian, was born in Leicestershire, England, October 25, 1800; the years of his life therefore coincide with those of the century. He was descended on his father's side from Scotch Presbyterians; on his mother's side, from a Quaker family; and to his earnest and accomplished parents he owed many admirable traits of character. His father, a silent, austere, pious man, was a leader in the Society for the Abolition of Slavery; edited the newspaper of the Abolitionist Society; and numbered among his intimate friends, who often met round his table and discussed in the presence of his children the right and wrong of great political ques-

[1] The *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, by his nephew, G. Otto Trevelyan, is one of the best biographies ever written; and all who can should make their acquaintance with Macaulay's career from the pages of that fascinating work. Unlike some standard books, it is interesting and inspiring to young readers as well as to old, and it should be put within reach of all students of Macaulay's writings. The best short life of Macaulay is that by J. Cotter Morrison in the English Men of Letters Series. Mr. Morrison's book, which costs little, contains only six chapters, of which three are biographical and three critical; the biographical chapters can be read by themselves in two or three hours. Those who cannot read the charming *Life and Letters* should by all means read Mr. Morrison's little book. The sketch of Macaulay's life here given is only for those who cannot do even that.

tions, the distinguished philanthropist William Wilberforce, who did more than any other man to secure the abolition of the slave trade.

Macaulay's mother, to whom he perhaps owed more than to his father, was, according to Mr. Morrison, "a woman of warm-hearted and affectionate temper, yet clear-headed and firm withal, and with a good eye for the influences which go to the formation of character." When, for instance, her son, who liked to read at home better than to study at school, declared the weather to be too bad to "go to school to-day," his mother would say: "No, Tom; if it rains cats and dogs you shall go." When he brought to her—as he often did—childish compositions in prose and verse that were, as Miss Hannah More said, "quite extraordinary for such a baby," she refrained from expressions of surprise which might have made him vain, and appeared to take as a matter of course his remarkable performances, which secretly astonished and delighted her. Yet, when he fell ill, she nursed him with a loving tenderness that he remembered all his life. Nothing indicates Mrs. Macaulay's influence over her son better than a letter which she wrote to him when he was a boy at school:—

CLAPHAM, *May* 28, 1813.

My dear Tom: I am very happy to hear that you have so far advanced in your different prize exercises, and with such little fatigue. I know you write with great ease to yourself, and would rather write ten poems than prune one; but remember that excellence is not attained at first. All your pieces are much mended after a little reflection, and therefore take some solitary walks, and think over each separate thing. Spare no time or trouble to render each piece as perfect as you can, and then leave the event without one anxious thought. I have always admired a saying of one of the old heathen philosophers. When a friend was condoling with him that he so well deserved of the gods, and yet that they did not shower their favors on

him, as on some others less worthy, he answered, "I will, however, continue to deserve well of them." So do you, my dearest. Do your best, because it is the will of God you should improve every faculty to the utmost now, and strengthen the powers of your mind by exercise, and then in future you will be better enabled to glorify God with all your powers and talents, be they of a more humble or higher order, and you shall not fail to be received into everlasting habitations, with the applauding voice of your Saviour, "Well done, good and faithful servant." You see how ambitious your mother is. She must have the wisdom of her son acknowledged before angels and an assembled world. My wishes can soar no higher, and they can be content with nothing less for any of my children. The first time I saw your face, I repeated those beautiful lines of Watts's cradle hymn:

> Mayst thou live to know and fear Him,
> Trust and love Him all thy days,
> *Then* go and dwell forever near Him,
> See His face, and sing His praise;

and this is the substance of all my prayers for you. In less than a month you and I shall, I trust, be rambling over the Common, which now looks quite beautiful.

I am ever, my dear Tom, your affectionate mother,

SELINA MACAULAY.

Under the care of these plain-living, high-thinking parents, Macaulay passed a happy childhood. From the time that he was three years old, he gave proof of a remarkable literary faculty. He read incessantly, for the most part lying on the rug before the fire, with his book on the floor, and a piece of bread and butter in his hand. He did not care for toys, but was very fond of taking his walk, when he would hold forth to his companion, whether nurse or mother, telling interminable stories out of his head, or repeating what he had been reading. Before he was eight years old he wrote for his own amusement a "Compendium of Universal History," which filled about a quire of paper

and gave a tolerably connected view of leading events from the Creation to 1800. Among his many other literary ventures at this time was a poem in the style of Sir Walter Scott, which was suggested by his delight in reading the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" and "Marmion." This stanza is a specimen of the style of the eight-year-old poet:—

> "Day set on Cambria's hills supreme,
> And, Menai, on thy silver stream.
> The star of day had reached the west.
> Now in the main it sunk to rest.
> Shone great Eleindyn's castle tall:
> Shone every battery, every hall:
> Shone all fair Mona's verdant plain;
> But chiefly shone the foaming main."

These productions of Macaulay's childhood—histories, epic poems, hymns—though correct in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, were dashed off at headlong speed.

At the age of twelve the precocious boy was sent to an excellent small school at Shelford, near Cambridge, where he was painfully homesick, but where, in an atmosphere pervaded with the influence of the neighboring university, he laid the foundations of his scholarship. No schoolboy should omit to read Macaulay's letters home during this period; for nowhere else are some of the characteristics of this remarkable man so clearly seen as in the letters and exercises of his school and college days. In athletic games he was not expert; his life was absorbed in books, though not always in schoolbooks. His favorite reading throughout life was poetry and prose fiction, and at school he often indulged this excessive fondness for pleasant reading to the neglect of more bracing studies. He especially disliked mathematics and the exact sciences, writing to his mother: "Oh for words to express my abomination of

that science [mathematics]. . . . Discipline of the mind! Say rather starvation, confinement, torture, annihilation!" Macaulay lived to change his mind and deeply regret this mistake of his school-days. Many years afterward he wrote: "I often regret, and even acutely, my want of a senior wrangler's[1] knowledge of physics and mathematics; and I regret still more some habits of mind which a senior wrangler is pretty certain to possess." In fact, the grave consequences of young Macaulay's one-sided inclination for literature can be traced throughout his career. Poetry, history, and fiction, read fast and chiefly for pleasure's sake, were very poor discipline for a mind in which fancy and imagination were already strong; and some faculties of Macaulay's mind, for want of proper exercise, remained always weak. Critics point out, even in his best writings, a "want of philosophic grasp," a "dislike of arduous speculation," a "superficial treatment of intellectual problems."

From the little school at Shelford, Macaulay went, in 1818, to Trinity College, Cambridge. He failed to secure the highest university honors because of his repugnance to mathematics; but he showed his classical and literary attainments by taking the prize for Latin declamation, by twice gaining the chancellor's medal for English verse, and by winning a scholarship. In the Union Debating Society he soon distinguished himself as one of the best debaters in the university, and in Cambridge social circles he became known as one of the most brilliant conversers in England. Day or night he was always ready to talk, and such talk! "Never were such torrents of good talk as burst and sputtered over from Macaulay and Hallam." "The greatest marvel about him is the quantity of trash he remembers." "Macaulay's flow of talk never ceased

[1] "Senior Wrangler" is the name given to the student who ranks first in the honor list at Cambridge University.

once during the four hours." These are extracts from the journals of some who heard him.

But it was not only "trash" that Macaulay remembered, for he seems to have remembered nearly everything he read, often getting by heart long passages that pleased him merely from his delight in reading them over. When a child he once accompanied his father on an afternoon call, and found on the table a copy of Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel," which he had not seen before. He kept himself quiet with his prize while the elders were talking, and when he returned home, sitting down on his mother's bed, he repeated to her canto after canto. When he was fifty-seven years old he learned by heart in two hours the fourth act of the "Merchant of Venice," except a hundred and fifty lines, which he already knew. He once said that if all copies of "Paradise Lost" and "The Pilgrim's Progress" should be destroyed, he could reproduce them from memory. This extraordinary memory remained with Macaulay to the last, and is the wonder and despair of his readers. It is the more remarkable because he read very rapidly. "He read books faster than other people skimmed them, and skimmed them as fast as any one else could turn the leaves." And he read omnivorously. Except when he was talking, writing, or engaged in public business, he hardly passed a waking hour without a book before him. Speaking of a journey from England to Ireland, he says, "As I could not read, I used an excellent substitute for reading. I went through 'Paradise Lost,' in my head." Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, English —it was all one. The following is a list of the books he went through in the original language while on a voyage to India at the age of thirty-four: Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey;" Virgil's "Æneid," "Eclogues," and "Georgics;" Horace's poems; Cæsar's "Commentaries;" Bacon's "De Augmentis;" the works of Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto,

and Tasso; "Don Quixote;" Gibbon's "Rome;" Mill's "India;" all the seventy volumes of Voltaire; Sismondi's "History of France;" and seven large volumes of the "Biographia Britannica."

Macaulay's wonderful memory was a most useful endowment; but his habit of incessant and omnivorous reading was something of a defect. Emerson remarks that the means by which the soul attains its highest development are books, travel, society, solitude; the first three Macaulay used, but solitude he neglected. He never gave himself time *to think* hard and deeply. Remarkable as his writings are, they would have been still more valuable, perhaps, if he had read less and reflected more. His brilliant works sometimes lack meditation and thoughtfulness.

After his graduation from Trinity (1822) Macaulay remained at Cambridge, pursuing post-graduate studies for the degree of Master of Arts, and in 1824, after an examination in which he stood first among the candidates, he was elected a Fellow of Trinity College, that is, one of the sixty masters of the college, with an income of $1,500 a year for seven years. In 1826 he was, as the English say, called to the Bar; but he did not take kindly to the law, got little or no practice, and soon laid aside his law books to devote himself exclusively to literature and politics.

In literature he had become distinguished even before he left Cambridge, partly by his college essays and poems, but more by his contributions, when a Bachelor of Arts, to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*. Of these contributions, two battle poems, "Ivry" and "Naseby," are still read with pleasure. "Fragments of a Roman Tale" and "Scenes from the Athenian Revels"—attempts to picture the private life of bygone days—suggest that Macaulay might have written admirable historical novels. The "Conversation between Mr. Abraham Cowley and Mr.

John Milton," which was his own favorite among his early writings, is, in the minds of many, superior in style and diction to anything that he wrote in later life. But Macaulay's real literary fame began in 1825, when he wrote his first essay for the *Edinburgh Review*. This famous *Review* was at that time the leading periodical in Great Britain, and exerted a literary and political influence never equalled before or since. To be admitted to its pages was the highest compliment that could be paid a young writer, and Macaulay was invited to write for it. His first contribution was the celebrated "Essay on Milton."[1] As criticism, this Essay has little value, for Macaulay was never a subtle or profound critic, capable of analyzing and exhibiting the beauties of literary masterpieces; but as a piece of writing it is extraordinary, and it at once arrested the attention of the public. Jeffrey, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, wrote: "The more I think, the less I can conceive where you picked up that style." Murray, the publisher, declared that it would be worth the copyright of Byron's "Childe Harold" to have the writer on the staff of the *Quarterly Review*, the Tory rival of the *Edinburgh*. The Macaulay breakfast table was covered with cards from the most distinguished personages in London society, inviting the brilliant young essayist to dinner. He was courted and admired by the most distinguished persons of the day, and from that time on was one of the "lions" of London society; for London soon discovered what Cambridge knew before, that he was one of the most entertaining conversers in the world.

The "Essay on Milton" was but the beginning of a long series of more than forty articles—critical, historical, and controversial—which were contributed during the next twenty years to the *Edinburgh Review*, and made their author the best known essayist of the nineteenth century.

[1] See Mr. Croswell's edition of the *Essay on Milton* in this series.

The last *Review* article was the "Essay on the Earl of Chatham," published in 1844.

But these famous essays, so far from being Macaulay's main occupation, were, in fact, struck off in hastily snatched moments of leisure—some of them before breakfast—by a man whose time was chiefly occupied with the business of Parliament or various departments of the Government; for Macaulay was early drawn into public life, and in politics won immense distinction when he was still a young man. Mr. Gladstone declares that "except the second Pitt and Lord Byron, no Englishman had ever won, at so early an age, such wide and honorable renown." After two years' service as a Commissioner of Bankruptcy, he became, in 1830, a member of Parliament, through the friendliness of a nobleman who controlled the membership for Calne. This was just at the beginning of the great struggle to reform the representation in the House of Commons, and Macaulay plunged at once into the heat of battle. His very first speech in favor of the Reform Bill (1831) placed him in the front rank of orators. The Speaker sent for him and told him that he had never seen the House in such a state of excitement. Thereafter, whenever he rose to speak in Parliament, the remark, "Macaulay is up," running through the lobbies and committee rooms, was the signal for a general rush to hear him. Mr. Morrison thinks that "it may well be questioned whether Macaulay was so well endowed for any career as that of a great orator."

The young Whig soon became an important member of his party, filling some important offices, and distinguishing himself by hard work and high-minded, unselfish devotion for the public good. He once voted for a measure that took away his own office; at another time he resigned his government position, rather than hurt his father's feelings by helping to support a compromise Slavery Bill

which his father did not approve. All this time he was a comparatively poor man. When he first went to college his father believed himself to be worth $500,000; but interest in public matters had led Mr. Macaulay to neglect his private business; and, while the son was still at Cambridge, money troubles began to throw their shadow on the family. Macaulay received the news bravely; while waiting for his fellowship, took private pupils to relieve his father of the burden of his expenses; devoted his income thereafter to providing for his sisters and paying off his father's debts; and, hardest of all, did it with a cheerful good humor that brought sunshine again to the home. One of his sisters says that those who did not know him during those dark days "never knew him in his most brilliant, witty, and fertile vein." His fellowship of $1,500 was very useful to him, but it expired in 1831; his political office was swept away by a change of ministry; he could not possibly make more than $1,000 a year by writing; and while he was winning fame in Parliament he was reduced to such straits that he had to sell a gold medal he had won at Cambridge. When, therefore, in 1834, the post of legal adviser to the Supreme Council of India was offered him, with a salary from which he could in a few years save $100,000, he accepted, and sailed for India.

In India Macaulay spent several years of hard work. Besides his regular official duties, he accepted the chairmanships of the Committee of Public Instruction and the Committee to draw up two new Codes of Laws for the country; and in both these committees he rendered services whose good effect remains to this day. Among other things he helped to introduce the study of European literature and science among the natives of India. Meanwhile he wrote a few essays for the *Review,* and read prodigiously.

In 1838 he returned to England. He was at once re-

elected to Parliament as member for Edinburgh, and for the next ten years he was a prominent figure in the House of Commons and held important offices, two of them cabinet offices. But from the time of his sojourn in India, his interest in politics visibly declined, and after 1848 he seldom appeared in public life.

That which allured Macaulay from politics was his famous "History of England from the Accession of James II.," which engrossed most of his time and thought during the last twenty years of his life. This "History" is "undoubtedly the most brilliant and the most popular history ever written."[1] The work is in five volumes, and covers a period of only seventeen years; but probably it has been more widely read than any other history in the English language. It shows vast research, extraordinary power of narrative, and an unrivalled splendor of style. It has, of course, certain faults; but with these we are not now concerned. The first two volumes appeared in 1848, and took England and America by storm. The third and fourth volumes were published in 1855. The fifth volume, unfinished, was published after the death of the author. Within a generation of its first appearance, one hundred and forty thousand copies of the "History" were sold in Great Britain only. In America no other book except the Bible ever had such a sale. It was translated into German, Polish, Danish, Swedish, Hungarian, Russian, Bohemian, Italian, French, Dutch, Spanish, and Persian. In a single check Macaulay received from his English publishers, as part of his share of the proceeds, the amazing sum of $100,000.

Two other literary works of our author remain to be noticed. "Lays of Ancient Rome"—a series of martial ballads—was published in 1842. But poetry with Macaulay was rather a recreation than a serious business, and

[1] C. K. Adams, *Manual of Historical Literature*, p. 463.

these stirring tales in verse, though admirable and widely popular, are not so important as his other achievements.

The last of Macaulay's writings was a group of biographical sketches, written during the later years of his life for the "Encyclopædia Britannica," after he had ceased to write for the *Review*, and while he was busy with his "History." These were the articles on Atterbury, Bunyan, Goldsmith, Doctor Johnson, and William Pitt, which are still to be found under those titles in the present (ninth) edition of the "Britannica." The "Life of William Pitt" was the last of Macaulay's writings published during his life-time. These "Lives," especially, perhaps, the "Life of Doctor Johnson," which is the subject of this volume, are among the best of his works.

During his last years honors fell thick and fast on Macaulay's head. He was elected to many positions of distinction and honor, and in 1857 he was made a peer of the House of Lords—the first literary man to receive that distinction. But he never spoke in the House of Lords. For a number of years before his death his health was frail. He died at his residence, Holly Lodge, Kensington, December 28, 1859, of heart disease. Two months before, he wrote in his diary: "October 25, 1859. My birthday. I am fifty-nine years old. Well, I have had a happy life. I do not know that any one whom I have seen close has had a happier." He is buried in the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey.

Macaulay was an upright, amiable man, and his life was one of placid content and quiet happiness. "No act inconsistent with the strictest honor and integrity has ever been imputed to him."[1] "We cannot imagine him doing anything wrong, or even indecorous."[2] He enjoyed the good things of life with heartiness, yet he was strik-

[1] Mark Pattison.
[2] J. C. Morrison.

ingly unselfish, and one of the most prominent qualities revealed in his "Letters" is a sweet, affectionate tenderness for his friends. His domestic life was singularly beautiful. Even his keenest literary critics speak with admiration of his bearing towards his parents, his sisters, and his nephews and nieces. To the latter he was an ideal uncle—the "good uncle" of story books. When he died, his sister wrote: "We have lost the light of our home, the most tender, loving, generous, unselfish, devoted of friends. What he was to me for fifty years who can tell? What a world of love he poured out upon me and mine." His only domestic fault, according to his nephew, seems to have been that he did not like dogs! His very last act was to write a letter to a poor curate, enclosing a check for twenty-five pounds.

His personal appearance is thus described by his nephew, Mr. Trevelyan:

"Macaulay's outward man was never better described than in two sentences of Praed's Introduction to Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*. 'There came up a short, manly figure, marvellously upright, with a bad neckcloth, and one hand in his waistcoat pocket. Of regular beauty he had little to boast; but in faces where there is an expression of great power, or of great good-humor, or both, you do not regret its absence.' This picture, in which every touch is correct, tells all that there is to be told. He had a massive head, and features of a powerful and rugged cast; but so constantly lighted up by every joyful and ennobling emotion that it mattered little if, when absolutely quiescent, his face was rather homely than handsome. While conversing at table, no one thought him otherwise than good looking; but when he rose, he was seen to be short and stout in figure. . . . He at all times sat and stood straight, full, and square; and in this respect Woolner, in the fine statue at Cambridge, has missed what was undoubtedly the most marked fact in his personal appearance. He dressed badly, but not cheaply. His clothes, though ill put on, were good."

Of his manner in conversation Mr. Trevelyan says:

"Whatever fault might be found with Macaulay's gestures as an orator, his appearance and bearing in conversation were singularly effective. Sitting bolt upright, his hands resting on the arms of his chair or folded over the handle of his walking-stick; knitting his great eyebrows if the subject was one that had to be thought out as he went along, or brightening from the forehead downwards when a burst of humor was coming; his massive features and honest glance suited well with the manly, sagacious sentiments which he set forth in his pleasant, sonorous voice, and in his racy and admirably intelligible language."

Macaulay's method of work is thus described by his nephew:

"The main secret of Macaulay's success lay in this, that to extraordinary fluency and facility he united patient, minute, and persistent diligence. He well knew, as Chaucer knew before him, that

> There is na workeman
> That can bothe worken wel and hastilie.
> This must be done at leisure parfaitlie.

"If his method of composition ever comes into fashion, books probably will be better, and undoubtedly will be shorter. As soon as he had got into his head all the information relating to any particular episode in his 'History' (such, for instance, as Argyll's expedition to Scotland, or the attainder of Sir John Fenwick, or the calling in of the clipped coinage), he would sit down and write off the whole story at a headlong pace; sketching in the outlines under the genial and audacious impulse of a first conception; and securing in black and white each idea, and epithet, and turn of phrase, as it flowed straight from his busy brain to his rapid fingers. His manuscript, at this stage, to the eyes of any one but himself, appeared to consist of column after column of dashes and flourishes, in which a straight line with a half formed letter at each end, and another in the middle, did duty for a word. . . .

"As soon as Macaulay had finished his rough draft, he began to fill it in at the rate of six sides of foolscap every morning; written in so large a hand, and with such a multitude of erasures, that the whole six pages were, on an average, compressed in two pages of print. This portion he called his 'task,' and he was never quite easy unless he completed it daily. More he seldom sought to accomplish; for he had learned by long experience that this was as much as he could do at his best; and except when at his best, he never would work at all. . . .

"Macaulay never allowed a sentence to pass muster until it was as good as he could make it. He thought little of recasting a chapter in order to obtain a more lucid arrangement, and nothing whatever of reconstructing a paragraph for the sense of one happy stroke or apt illustration. Whatever the worth of his labor, at any rate it was a labor of love."

Macaulay's essays may be thus conveniently classified:

1. *English History Group.*—Milton;[1] Hallam (one of the best); John Hampden; Burleigh and his Times (one of the weakest); Horace Walpole (unjust); William Pitt, Earl of Chatham (1834; incomplete); The Earl of Chatham (completes the story of Chatham's life); Sir James Mackintosh; Sir William Temple (one of the best); Lord Clive; Warren Hastings. (The last two are among the most famous of the essays.)

2. *Foreign History Group.*—Machiavelli; Mirabeau; War of the Succession in Spain; Von Ranke (the real subject is the "History of the Popes"; the third paragraph is widely celebrated); Frederick the Great; Barère.

3. *Controversial Group.*—Mill's Theory of Government (three essays); Saddler's Law of Population (two essays); Southey's Colloquies on Society; Gladstone on Church and State. (These controversial essays possess but little permanent interest.)

4. *Critical Group.*—John Dryden; History; Montgom-

[1] See Mr. Croswell's edition in this series.

ery; John Bunyan (1830); Lord Byron (discusses the nature of poetry); Boswell's "Life of Johnson" (1831); Lord Bacon (the poorest of them all); Leigh Hunt (the real subject is "The Comic Dramatists of the Restoration"); Madame D'Arblay; Addison (which Thackeray calls "a magnificent statue of the great writer and moralist").

5. *Biographical Group.*—(All written for the "Encyclopædia Britannica.") Francis Atterbury; John Bunyan (1854); Oliver Goldsmith; Samuel Johnson (1856); William Pitt (son of the Earl of Chatham).

II. Macaulay's Style and Genius.

1. With Macaulay's characteristics as orator, poet, and historian we are not now concerned; for the subject of our present study brings him before us as an essayist only, in which character, perhaps, he is most widely known. His essays, of which a classified list is given above, cover a very wide range of subjects. In them Macaulay had something to say, directly or indirectly, about nearly all the important persons and events in history. For a busy man of only moderate education, who has curiosity to know a little about the great lives and great thoughts of the past, the "Essays" are as good as a library.[1] They are somewhat unequal in merit, those written after the author's return from India being in some respects better than those written before his departure from England; but taken as a whole they are the most famous essays ever written in English. They have been read by millions, and thousands of copies are still sold every year. If we except Shakespeare's plays and Scott's novels, they have probably done more to stimulate interest in the past than any other books. All that many persons know of history they have learned from Macaulay's "Essays." Other

[1] Mr. John Morley.

works on the same subjects may be more profound and more exhaustive, but none are so easily understood and so readily enjoyed by the masses. As powerful, popular sketches of great subjects from history and literature, they are unrivalled; and we can easily believe the traveller in Australia who said that the three books which he found on every squatter's shelf were Shakespeare, the Bible, and Macaulay's "Essays."

An author who has thus made the history of politics and letters interesting to millions is no ordinary writer. The general public, in fact, is disposed to think that Macaulay is not only a great writer, but one of the very greatest; and it is certain that in many admirable qualities he has never been surpassed. Yet some expert judges, examining the Essays from the point of view of the highest criticism, find much fault with the judgment of the general public, and declare Macaulay to be overpraised. The fact seems to be that those who admire the Essays and those who find fault with them are thinking of different things. The inexpert masses delight in reading them because of certain admirable qualities in which they have never been excelled; expert critics, passing these admirable qualities by with hasty recognition, point to some serious shortcomings. It is the purpose of this Introduction to help the student to see both the merits and the faults of Macaulay as an essayist.

What, then, is the secret of Macaulay's astonishing popularity? As we turn his pages one of the very first things that impress us is the vast and accurate knowledge of literature and history with which his mind was evidently stored. One of the most remarkable things about Macaulay was the number of things he knew and knew well. He seems to his readers to know by heart every book that was ever written, to be acquainted with the details of every incident in history, and to have at his fingers' end every

trait and anecdote of every important person that ever lived; for, whatever his subject, he pours over it with astonishing ease a flood of illustrations, comparisons, and contrasts drawn from the literature of all languages and the history of all countries. His store of information seems inexhaustible; his prose, like Milton's poetry, is "freighted with the spoils of all ages."[1] Macaulay's style, it has been truly said, is before all else the style of great literary knowledge; and the ordinary reader who would follow intelligently the allusions which are scattered over almost every page of the Essays must keep his reference books constantly at his elbow. When we lay down the Essays we involuntarily ask ourselves, "Was there anything this man did not know?" As a matter of fact Macaulay knew very little about philosophy, and his books contain few reference, to the astonishing discoveries of modern natural science; but we forget these limitations in the presence of his wonderful literary and historical information. This is the first secret of his wide-spread fame. Just as we like to listen to the conversation of a well-informed person, so we like to read Macaulay's Essays, for from them we learn a great many things with very little trouble.

Another reason for Macaulay's popularity is the manner in which he conveys his knowledge to the reader. Many learned men are dull authors; Macaulay is one of the most agreeable. He had in a remarkable degree the power of pleasing by the very manner of his writing, and however dry his subject, he always contrived to write what persons like to read. The charm of a writer's style, like grace in a person's bearing, is a difficult thing to analyze and explain; it is a subtle something which we feel, though we can hardly describe it; yet some qualities of the style of this brilliant writer are so obvious that they can easily be set forth.

[1] Mark Pattison.

For one thing, his language is always absolutely clear. Above all things he was resolved to be understood, and it is doubtful whether he ever wrote an obscure sentence. He never for a moment leaves the reader in doubt as to what he means, and he seems to have made it his first care to write not only what could be understood, but what must be understood. He economizes our attention, as Herbert Spencer would say, by using language through which we see his ideas as we see objects through fine plate glass—without the slightest effort. Macaulay sacrificed something to gain this crystalline clearness; yet clearness is certainly the first essential of good writing.

Then, too, Macaulay's style is always lively, his tone hearty and strong. His writing has much of the rush and eloquence which belonged to his oratory, and it swings our attention along by the mere impetuosity of its movement. His learning never clogs his story or his explanation; he is always moving forward; and the reading of his pages brings much of the exhilaration that comes with all rapid motion. A great, strong man, knowing everything, and telling us many things with perfect clearness in a lively manner and a full round voice—such is Macaulay to the readers of his Essays.

These and other qualities make Macaulay one of the best story-tellers that ever lived. Others have surpassed him in intellectual depth, in moral insight, and in some other valuable qualities; but in the mere art of telling a story in a clear and interesting way, he has no rival. "He is unequalled in our time in his mastery of the art of letting us know in an express and unmistakable way exactly what it was that happened."[1] His narratives, to use a common expression, "read like novels;" that is to say, by the clearness of his pictures and the vivacity of his story, he makes persons and events of the past as real and

[1] Mr John Morley.

interesting as a skilful novelist makes the creatures of his imagination. We see a figure from the eighteenth century as vividly as if he were present, and seem to understand everything that happened as if we had been there. And so easily is all this done that the story seems to tell itself. As the reader sees and understands with perfect ease, so there is no trace of effort on the part of the author.

Macaulay, then, knew a marvellous number of interesting things, which he imparts to the reader in a most lively and attractive manner, being, in fact, one of the best story-tellers that ever lived. To these qualities which make him a favorite with the masses must be added the fact that he never perplexes his readers with deep thinking. His writings are full of strong, English common-sense; but of profound reflection and close, subtle reasoning there is no trace. Anything that would be hard for an ordinary man of business to understand is carefully avoided; everything is looked at from the point of view of the middle classes, who cannot understand philosophers, and do not care to do overmuch thinking. He deals, not in the abstract, but in the concrete. Into the higher regions of thought he never goes. His mind moves along a middle plane, where the masses can easily follow, and this is another reason why the masses like to read him.

Macaulay's want of aspiration, of all effort to rise into the higher regions of thought, has lost him the good opinion of some readers, and is the first of those shortcomings which expert critics consider grave faults. "He is one of the most entertaining, but also one of the least suggestive, of writers." He "did nothing to stir the deeper mind or the deeper feelings of his multitude of readers." "He never had anything to say on the deeper aspects and relations of life; and it would not be easy to quote a sentence from either his published works or private letters which shows insight into or meditation on love, or

marriage, or friendship, or the education of children, or religion." "His learning is confined to book lore; he is not well read in the human heart, and still less in the human spirit." "His strength lay not in thinking but in drawing." These are some of the criticisms made with perfect truth by such critics as Walter Bagehot, Cotter Morrison, Mr. John Morley, and Mr. Leslie Stephen.[1] "Compare him with a calm, meditative, original writer like De Quincey, and you become vividly aware of his peculiar deficiency, as well as his peculiar strength; you find a more rapid succession of ideas and greater wealth of illustration, but you miss the subtle casuistry, the exact and finished similitudes, and the breaking up of routine views. No original opinion requiring patient consideration or delicate analysis is associated with the name of Macaulay. It better suited his stirring and excitable nature to apply his dazzling powers of expression and illustration to the opinions of others."[2]

This lack of depth in Macaulay's thinking is most noticeable, perhaps, in his sketches of character. It has been justly said that no one else describes so well the *spectacle* of a character, for Macaulay can always tell what people said, what they did, what they looked like; but he had "no eye for the deeper springs of character, the finer shades of motive."[3] "He can draw a most vivid portrait, so far as can be done by a picturesque accumulation of characteristic facts; but he never gets below the surface."[4] He can describe graphically exterior life, but his insight into men's bosoms is not deep. "Some portion of the essence of human nature is concealed from him; but all its accessories are at his command."[5] "Macaulay never

[1] See Bibliography, p. xl.
[2] Minto, *Manual of English Prose Literature.*
[3] J. C. Morrison.
[4] Mr. Leslie Stephen.
[5] Walter Bagehot.

stops to brood over an incident or a character, with an inner eye intent on penetrating to the lowest depth of motive and cause, to the furthest complexity of impulse, calculation, and subtle incentive. The spirit of analysis is not in him. His whole mind runs in action and movement; it busies itself with eager interest in all objective particulars. He is seized by the external and the superficial, and revels in every detail that appeals to the five senses."[1] "It may be noticed that the remarkable interest he often awakens in a story, which he tells so admirably, is nearly always the interest of adventure, never the interest of psychological analysis. Events and outward actions are told with incomparable clearness and vigor—but a thick curtain hangs before the inward theatre of the mind, which is never revealed on his stage."[2]

Another quality which hurts Macaulay in the opinion of men who are accustomed to careful and accurate thinking, though it is another reason for his popularity with the masses, is the extreme positiveness which pervades his writings. He represents everything as absolutely certain, and "goes forward with a grand confidence" in himself, his facts, and his opinions, which is delightful to many, but displeasing to those who know how extremely uncertain just these very things are. Macaulay is a "dealer in unqualified propositions."[3] However much obscurity may envelop a fact of history or a subject in literature, he "marches through the intricacies of things in a blaze of certainty." This confident tone is partly the expression of Macaulay's character, for he was a man of very positive convictions; but it is also, perhaps, a rhetorical quality cultivated in the interest of absolute clearness to the ordinary mind. "Eschewing high thought on the one hand, and deep feeling on the other, he marched down a middle road of resonant commonplace, quite certain that where

[1] Mr. John Morley. [2] J. C. Morrison. [3] Mr. Morley.

> 'Bang, whang, whang, goes the drum,
> And tootle-tee-tootle the fife,'

the densest crowd, marching in time, will follow the music."[1] A dense crowd has, indeed, followed Macaulay's drum and trumpet style with great satisfaction; but persons of highly cultivated taste are disposed to stop their ears in the presence of his resounding, banging phrases. Pattison well expressed the feeling of this class of readers when he said: "He has a constant tendency to glaring colors, to strong effects, and will always be striking violent blows. He is not merely exuberant, but excessive. There is an overwhelming confidence about his tone; he expresses himself in trenchant phrases, which are like challenges to an opponent to stand up and deny them. His propositions have no qualifications. Uninstructed readers like this assurance, as they like a physician who has no doubt about their case. But a sense of distrust grows upon the more circumspect reader as he follows page after page of Macaulay's categorical affirmations about matters which our own experience of life teaches us to be of a contingent nature. We inevitably think of a saying attributed to Lord Melbourne, 'I wish I were as cock-sure of any one thing as Macaulay is of everything.'"[2]

This is what critics mean when they speak of Macaulay's inaccuracy. It is not that his memory is at fault or that his learning is inadequate, but that the rush and the vigor of his thought lead him occasionally into sweeping assertions which are really exaggerations. His writings abound in superlative expressions; his style is marked by a wonderful vigor that sometimes overshoots the mark. When a difficult question crosses his path, he disposes of it in a dashing way with some simple, easy answer, which everyone can understand, but which more profound thinkers perceive to be inadequate and unsatisfactory. It is cer-

[1] J. C. Morrison. [2] *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

tain, however, that Macaulay was never intentionally inaccurate, and that he never knowingly called black white, or white black. He is a thoroughly honest, manly writer; and his exaggerations are only manifestations of that heartiness which was a part of his strong character.

To sum up, Macaulay, as Mr. Frederick Harrison has remarked, has led millions who read no one else, or who never read before, to know something of the past, and to enjoy reading. Let us be thankful for his energy, learning, brilliance. He is no priest, philosopher, or master; but let us delight in him as a companion. In one thing all agree—critics and the public, friends and opponents—Macaulay's was a life of purity, honor, courage, generosity, affection, and manly perseverance, almost without a stain or a defect. His was a fine, generous, honorable, and sterling nature. His books deserve their vast popularity; but Macaulay must not be judged among philosophers nor even among the greatest masters of the English language. He stands between philosophic historians and the public very much as journals and periodicals stand between the masses and great libraries. Macaulay is a glorified journalist and reviewer, who brings the matured results of scholars to the man in the street in a form that he can remember and enjoy, when he could not make use of a learned book. He performs the office of the ballad-maker or story-teller in an age before books were common. And it is largely due to the influence of his style that the best journals and periodicals of our day are written in a style so clear, so direct, so resonant.[1]

The technical elements of Macaulay's style can be profitably studied only in connection with the text of his writings; all discussion of such matters is therefore reserved for the Notes (see p. 104).

[1] This paragraph is based, with some changes, upon a portion of Mr. Harrison's article in *The Forum* for September, 1894.

III. Macaulay on Johnson.

Macaulay wrote two articles on Samuel Johnson, twenty-five years apart, and very different in character. The first appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in September, 1831, as a review of J. W. Croker's edition of "Boswell's Life of Johnson." Croker[1] was one of Macaulay's political opponents in the House of Commons, twenty years his senior, and a bitter personal enemy. He had ability, was Secretary to the Admiralty, and an enthusiatic student of history and literature; but he was an unamiable man, and in one of his speeches had spoken of Macaulay's orations as "vague generalities handled with that brilliant imagination which tickles the ear and amuses the fancy without satisfying the reason." The purpose and temper of Macaulay's review of Croker's edition of "Boswell," may be best learned from several passages in Macaulay's letters. Three months before Croker's book appeared, Macaulay wrote to the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, "I will certainly review Croker's 'Boswell' when it comes out." One week after the book was published he wrote to his sister: "I am to review Croker's edition of Bozzy. It is wretchedly ill done. The notes are poorly written and shamefully inaccurate." A few weeks later, after making an extemporaneous speech in the House of Commons, he wrote: "I ought to tell you that Peel was very civil, and cheered me loudly; and that impudent, leering Croker congratulated the House on the proof which I had given of my readiness. . . . See whether I do not dust that varlet's jacket for him in the next number of the *Blue and Yellow*.[2] I detest him more than cold boiled veal."

[1] See Mr. Miller's edition of Southey's *Life of Nelson*, in this series, p. xxi., and Southey's dedication, p. 3.

[2] The cover of the *Edinburgh Review* was dark blue, with a yellow back.

On October 17, 1831, after his article appeared, he wrote: "Croker looks across the House of Commons at me with a leer of hatred which I repay with a gracious smile of pity."

It is evident that a review inspired by this personal quarrel can have little permanent interest. The first forty paragraphs of the essay on "Boswell's Life of Johnson" treat only of Croker's edition of Boswell's celebrated book, and smack strongly of personal animosity. In them the reviewer dwells at length and with relish on certain errors in Croker's dates and genealogies, ascribing to them an exaggerated importance, and exposing them in a way to humiliate Croker and make him out a dunce. He says Croker's book is "as bad as bad could be;" maintains that the "notes absolutely swarm with misstatements;" comments in detail on the "monstrous blunders" and "scandalous inaccuracy;" and declares Croker to be "entitled to no confidence whatever." Macaulay's criticism is founded on fact, but it is unjust in tone and emphasis. A more just, though still an unfavorable, review of Croker's "Boswell" will be found in Carlyle's "Essay" on the same subject. The rest of Macaulay's "Essay on Boswell's Johnson" consists of two parts. The first treats at length of the character of Boswell, the second discusses Doctor Johnson himself. These parts of the "Essay" are marked by all the vigor and vivacity of Macaulay's early style. The eccentricities of both Boswell and Johnson are set forth with unexampled clearness and power; but combined with these brilliant qualities of style is a tendency to exaggeration, a lack of insight into character, and a superficial treatment of difficult problems, which make the "Essay" unjust to both Johnson and his satellite.

The second of Macaulay's articles on Johnson, and by far the best, is the "Life of Samuel Johnson," written in

1856 for the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and retained in the present edition of that standard work. In this "Life," written when his style was matured and when his resources were in all their fulness, we have Macaulay at his very best. The tone is moderate, the language is chaste, and though there is little appreciation of Johnson's inner character, the external husk of the man is delineated in a masterly way.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

MACAULAY'S "Life of Johnson" is a sketch of the central literary figure of the eighteenth century, by one of the most accomplished literary artists of the nineteenth; both its subject-matter and its form, therefore, demand the careful attention of the student of English literature. Persons of disciplined mind and trained judgment may study both at once, but young students, with whom all reading is more or less difficult, cannot well attend to more than one thing at a time. If they are required to spend their little store of mental energy on unfamiliar words, historical and literary allusions, and still to follow the progress of the author's thought, observe his plan, and note the details of his diction, they are almost sure to do nothing well, and, even worse than that, to grow weary of literary study —a sorry outcome of a course of training the object of which is to foster love for good reading. That all things may be done well, it seems best to do one thing at a time; the notes in this volume have therefore been separated into two groups: Explanatory Notes, for use in the student's first reading, and a Critical Note, for use in later readings.

The following suggestions are offered to those who may have no better plan of their own.

I. The first step in the study of such a piece of writing as Macaulay's "Life of Samuel Johnson," is to make the acquaintance of the author. This can most satisfactorily be done from one or more of the biographies of Macaulay

mentioned below, and teachers who have time and opportunity will do well to require as supplementary reading either Trevelyan's "Life and Letters," or Mr. Morrison's brief "Life." When this is not practicable, at least as much of Macaulay's life and work as is contained in the Introduction to the present volume should be mastered by the student before he takes up the "Life of Johnson." At least one recitation period may well be used in an examination, oral or written, on the chief points in Macaulay's life, and the general merits and faults which his writing may be expected to disclose.

II. When the student has made the acquaintance of Macaulay, he is ready to begin the "Life of Johnson." Here, obviously, the first thing to do is to read the text so as to understand it; for clear understanding must come before critical appreciation. During this first reading, immature students should not be bothered with literary criticism beyond what their own taste or judgment may suggest to them. They should be left alone with Macaulay's style, just as Agassiz used to leave his pupils alone with the bit of nature which they were studying, and for much the same reason; namely, that their own critical faculties may have room for development. In order that their time may not be dissipated, and they themselves wearied and disheartened by laborious and often fruitless searches after the meaning of allusions and names the relative importance of which they do not know, a certain amount of assistance in following Macaulay's numerous references to history and literature is given in the Explanatory Notes. Macaulay wrote primarily, not for school-boys, but for readers of mature culture; and the average student in secondary schools, even after he has received the help of the Explanatory Notes, which treat only of historical and literary allusions, will find enough of difficulty remaining to occupy his time, train his own thinking faculties,

and make him familiar with the use of dictionaries and other books of reference.

This reading of the text with a view to grasping its subject-matter should be done out of class, at a rate, according to circumstances, of from four to ten pages a lesson. During the recitation period the teacher should assure himself, by examinations, oral or written, or both, that the reading has been carefully done. One good plan is to require a brief impromptu composition exercise on some subject taken from the lesson but not announced beforehand, and to follow this with a rapid fire of oral questions, not necessarily exhaustive, on the meaning of words, the persons or places mentioned in the text, and the subject-matter. That this oral questioning may be rapid, it is convenient for the teacher to underscore in red or blue in his own book the subjects which he wishes to select as tests of the pupils' work. This questioning, of course, must not be confined to the subjects treated in the notes. For instance, on page 1 of the "Life of Johnson," such questions as these might be asked: Mention some of the most eminent English writers of the eighteenth century. Give an account of Johnson's father. Where is Lichfield? Name the Midland counties. What is an *oracle?* The meaning here of the word *clergy?* Meaning of *churchman?* Meaning of *municipal?* Explain *the sovereigns in possession.* Meaning of *Jacobite?* Where and when was Johnson born? Mention his peculiarities as a child. Meaning of *morbid, propensity, the royal touch?* Explain the old common name for scrofula. The following are suitable topics for short written exercises: Johnson's Father; Johnson's Peculiarities as a Child; The King's Evil. Written examinations should be frequent.

After the teacher has thus quickly tested the pupil's work—and tests need not be long or exhaustive in order to be thorough—what remains of the recitation period may

be occupied with any interesting matter bearing on the general subject. Pictures may be shown, stories of Johnson may be told, reports of special investigations heard. Without any reference to published criticisms, the pupils should be encouraged to form and express opinions of their own about either Johnson's character or Macaulay's style. Whether their opinions are right or wrong matters little; the important thing is that they learn to notice, to compare, and to think for themselves. If it be necessary to correct some grave error in opinion, it should be done with great gentleness, so as not to frighten timid thinkers. If some pupils are over-forward in making up their minds, it will perhaps be enough to remind them that their present opinions cannot be regarded as final. To this part of the recitation belongs, also, the important work described in IV.

III. After the student has carefully read the text so as to master its subject-matter and to form some independent opinion of the author's style, he is ready to take up the critical study of the work, and to rectify, if need be, his first impressions. To assist in this study of form and structure, a brief Critical Note, containing a few general hints as to method, has been added to this volume. It is by no means advisable that preparatory school pupils should make anything like an elaborate study of anyone's style. Something, however, may be accomplished in leading the student to imitate the finer qualities of Macaulay's style, and to know what it is that he is doing, and how he does it. Attention should be fixed on diction, sentence structure, paragraph structure, and the arrangement of the whole composition. No books will be needed for this work, except a good treatise on rhetoric, though the teacher may be glad to consult Minto's "English Prose Writers" and Brewster's "Studies in Structure and Style."

IV. Some teachers and students may be obliged by

limitations of time or opportunity to stop here, content with a mastery of the subject-matter and some insight into the peculiarities of the author's style; but the most valuable fruit of the study of Macaulay's "Life of Johnson" yet remains to be gathered. The real opportunity of both teacher and student lies in the fact that Johnson is the central literary figure of the later eighteenth century, and that Macaulay's "Life," because of its many allusions and cross references, is one of the best starting points for a study of that interesting period in the history of English life and letters. Into that rich field the "Life of Johnson" should be the gate. Though mentioned last, this study may go along with the work described in I. and II. Subjects for special investigation should be assigned to different pupils, and compositions on them read before the class. Books, or chapters in books, may be appointed for supplementary or home reading. The student who, taking the "Life of Johnson" as a starting point, will read along the lines suggested by Macaulay's allusions, will be surprised to find how his horizon will be enlarged and his thinking be enriched. To assist in this important part of the study, a fairly full list of books has been given in the Bibliography, and a few hints for the guidance of the student have been embodied in the Critical Note.

Bibliography.

1. *Macaulay.* The authorized edition of Macaulay's Works is that edited by his sister, Lady Trevelyan, and published in eight volumes by Longmans, Green, and Co. The same publishers issue various cheap editions of the several works. The "Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay," 2 vols., by his nephew, Sir G. Otto Trevelyan, is the standard biography, and a most readable book. The story of Macaulay's connection with the *Edinburgh Review* may be traced

in "Selections from the Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier." The best short biography is by J. Cotter Morrison in the English Men of Letters Series. Still shorter are the articles on Macaulay in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," by Mark Pattison, and in the "Dictionary of National Biography," by Mr. Leslie Stephen. The best critical essays are by Walter Bagehot in "Literary Studies," vol. ii.; Mr. Leslie Stephen, in "Hours in a Library," vol. iii.; Mr. John Morley in "Miscellanies," vol. ii., reprinted in Brewster's "Studies in Structure and Style" (Macmillan); and J. C. Morrison in his "Life." See also W. E. Gladstone's "Gleanings of Past Years." Minto's "Manual of English Prose Literature" contains a study of Macaulay's style with reference to technical rhetoric.

2. *Johnson.* The standard edition of Johnson's Works is the Oxford Classic Edition, 11 vols. "Rasselas" has been reprinted in many editions; among the best are those of Prof. F. N. Scott (Leach, Shewell, and Sanborn) and Prof. O. F. Emerson (Henry Holt and Co.). The *Rambler* and the *Idler* are separately printed in the series of "British Essayists," or may be consulted in G. B. Hill's "Select Essays of Samuel Johnson" (Macmillan). The "Vanity of Human Wishes" is in Syle's "From Milton to Tennyson;" both it and "London," are in Hales's "Longer English Poems." The "Lives of the Poets" may be had in the ten cent National Library (Cassell Publishing Co.), or in the Bohn Library, 3 vols. A selection of the "Six Chief Lives" (Milton, Dryden, Swift, Addison, Pope, and Gray) has been edited by Matthew Arnold (Macmillan; Holt). The best edition of Boswell's "Life of Johnson" is that edited by Mr. G. Birkbeck Hill (6 vols. Macmillan; Harper), a work that contains a wealth of supplementary material, and, with its admirable index, is one of the best reference books on eighteenth cen-

tury life and literature. Other editions in order of importance are Napier's, Mr. Henry Morley's (Routledge), and Croker's (Bohn). All of these contain many interesting pictures. A condensed "Boswell," "relieved from passages of obsolete interest," is published by Henry Holt and Co. Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes of Doctor Johnson," first published in 1786, may be had in the cheap National Series (Cassell); but everything of importance in the "Anecdotes" is included in the notes to Hill's "Boswell." The same remark is true of Sir John Hawkins's "Life of Johnson," published in 1787. The Correspondence of Johnson and Mrs. Thrale is printed, in part, in Scoone's "Four Centuries of English Letters."

Of modern critical biographies of Johnson the best is by Mr. Leslie Stephen in the English Men of Letters Series. This keen critic is also the author of the sketch in the "Dictionary of National Biography." Lieutenant-Colonel Grant's "Johnson," in the Great Writers Series, contains a bibliography to the year 1887. Among critical studies should be mentioned Landor's "Imaginary Conversations between Samuel Johnson and John Horne Tooke;" Mr. Leslie Stephen's "Dr. Johnson's Writings" in "Hours in a Library," vol. ii.; Carlyle's "Essay on Boswell's Life of Johnson," which may be regarded as a reply to Macaulay's essay on the same subject; Mr. A. Birrell's "Dr. Johnson" in "Obiter Dicta," Second Series; Mr. G. Birkbeck Hill's "Dr. Johnson, his Friends, and his Critics;" and chapters in Taine's "History of English Literature," Minto's "Manual of English Prose Literature," and Gosse's "History of Eighteenth Century Literature." For the life of Boswell, apart from Johnson, see "Boswelliana: the Commonplace Book of James Boswell" (London: 1874), and Mr. Leslie Stephen's "Boswell" in the "Dictionary of National Biography."

3. *Eighteenth Century History and Literature.* For

political history Gardiner's "Student's History of England" (Longmans) is probably the most convenient book for general use. Chapter iii. of Macaulay's "History" should be within reach; and Green's "Short History of the English People" is always valuable. Macaulay's Essays on "Horace Walpole," the "Earl of Chatham," "Madame D'Arblay," "Addison," and "Oliver Goldsmith," all treat of this period. Among special histories should be mentioned W. E. H. Lecky's "History of England in the Eighteenth Century," especially chapters iv., ix., and xxiii.; Edmund Gosse's "History of Eighteenth Century Literature" (the best sketch of the literature of the period); and Mr. Leslie Stephen's "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century." Additional illustrations of the life of this period will be found in the *Tatler* and the *Spectator;* Madame D'Arblay's "Diary and Letters" and "Early Journals;" Horace Walpole's "Letters;" Nichol's "Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century;" and Thackeray's "Lectures on the Four Georges."

4. *London.* Maps of London may be had in all sizes and styles from Rand, McNally, and Co. Baedeker's "Handbook for London," with its excellent maps and full index, is useful. For information about London of the eighteenth century see Wheatley's "London, Past and Present," 3 vols.; Hutton's "Literary Landmarks of London;" Lemon's "Up and Down the London Streets;" Hare's "Walks in London;" and Mr. Walter Besant's "London" (Harpers; published originally in *Harper's Magazine,* June, 1892).

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

The following questions may be of some service to teachers and students by way of indicating possible methods of examination.

1. Show, by analysis, the grammatical structure of the last sentence in paragraph 41 (page 36). Parse *which* (36 9), *hammer* (36 12).

2. Comment in detail on the structure of the sentences in paragraph 32 (page 23). What can you say of the length of the sentences and their arrangement in the paragraph? By *party* (23 20) does Macaulay mean one or more persons?

3. Explain the meaning (and, if important for that purpose, give the derivation) of the following words: *desultory* (3 18), *ceruse* (6 31), *novice* (8 25), *ordinaries* (9 21), *alamode* (9 21), *sycophancy* (9 28), *rabbis* (13 23), *maundered* (34 8), *poetasters* (39 3), *mitigated* (43 20).

4. Explain, as fully as possible, the following references and allusions: *such an author as Thomson* (8 17); *"the Senate of Lilliput"* (10 17); *the Capulets against the Montagues* (10 29, 30); *Grub Street* (14 26); *Drury Lane Theatre* (16 35). *This species of composition had been brought into fashion by the success of the Tatler, and by the still more brilliant success of the Spectator* (18 5–7); *witty as Lady Mary* (20 9, 10); *Johnson has frequently blamed Shakspeare for neglecting the proprieties of time and place* (23 27–29); *Cock Lane Ghost* (26 31); *Macpherson, whose "Fingal" had been proved to be an impudent forgery* (36 4, 5).

5. Write briefly of Johnson's Dictionary and "Rasselas." To what does Johnson owe his great reputation? Why? Write briefly of Johnson's friends. Explain the difference between the political opinions of Johnson and Burke, and attempt to account for it. Mention the chief characteristics of Johnson's style. Comment on Macaulay's statement (21 30–32) that English, as Johnson wrote it, *was scarcely a Teutonic language.*

6. Give a list of the famous English authors contemporary with Johnson, and a list of such of their works as you have read in whole or in part. On what books have you chiefly depended for your knowledge of English literature in the eighteenth century? Contrast briefly "The Vicar of Wakefield" and "Rasselas." What poet of Johnson's time is most his opposite in character and genius? Why? What other famous novels besides "Rasselas" (excluding "The Vicar of Wakefield") were written in the "Johnson age" and how do they compare with "Rasselas" in method and interest?

7. What traits of Macaulay's character made him especially well fitted to appreciate Johnson's genius? How, in your opinion, does the "Life of Johnson" compare in interest with other writings of Macaulay? Has it, in your opinion, any conspicuous limitations or defects?

8. Mention any parts of the "Life" that have specially interested you or have proved particularly suggestive.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—MACAULAY.

Macaulay's Life.	Macaulay's Works.	Contemporary History.	English Literature.	American Literature.
1800. Born.		1800. Bancroft born. Cowper died.		1800. Daniel Webster's first public speech (Hanover, July 4).
		1801. J. H. Newman born.		
			1802. *Edinburgh Review* founded.	
		1803. R.W. Emerson born.		
		1804. Napoleon emperor of France. Hawthorne and Disraeli born.		
		1805. Battles of Trafalgar and Austerlitz. Bulwer born.	1805. Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel.	
		1806. Lever and Mrs. Browning born.	1806. Coleridge's Christabel.	1806. Noah Webster's Dictionary.
		1807. Longfellow and Whittier born. Abolition of the English slave trade.	1807. Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare. Moore's Irish Melodies.	
	1808. Juvenile poems, etc.		1808. Scott's Marmion. *Quarterly Review* founded.	
		1809. Tennyson, Gladstone, Darwin, Holmes, Poe, and Lincoln born.		1809. Irving's History of New York.
		1811. Thackeray and Wendell Phillips born.		
		1812. Dickens, Robert Browning, and Mrs. Stowe born.	1812. Byron's Childe Harold, cantos i. and ii.	

1814. Sent to school at Shelford.			1814. Scott's Waverley. Wordsworth's Excursion.	
		1815. Battle of Waterloo.		1815. *North American Review* founded.
		1816. Sheridan died.		1816. Drake's Culprit Fay.
				1817. Bryant's Thanatopsis.
1818. Entered Trinity College, Cambridge.		1818. Froude born.	1818. Hallam's Middle Ages. Keats's Endymion.	
1819. First Chancellor's Medal.		1819. Ruskin, Lowell, Whitman, Clough, Kingsley, and George Eliot born.		1819. Irving's Sketch Book.
		1820. George IV. king. Spencer and Tyndall born.	1820. Keats's Eve of St. Agnes, Lamia, and Hyperion. Shelley's Prometheus Unbound.	
1821. Craven Scholarship. Second Chancellor's Medal.		1821. Keats died.	1821. De Quincey's Confessions.	1821. Cooper's Spy.
1822. Degree of B.A.		1822. Shelley died. Matthew Arnold and Gen. Grant born.	1822. Lamb's Essays of Elia.	
	1823–24. Contributions to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*.	1823. Parkman born.		1823. Cooper's Pilot and Pioneers.
1824. Elected Fellow of Trinity. Degree of M.A.	1824. First public speech.	1824. Byron died.		1824. Irving's Tales of a Traveller.
	1825. First essay for the *Edinburgh Review*. Milton.	1825. Huxley born.		1825. Webster's First Bunker Hill Oration.
1826. Called to the bar.				1826. Cooper's Last of the Mohicans.
	1827. Essay on Machiavelli.			1827. Poe's Tamerlane, etc.
1828. Commissioner of Bankruptcy.	1828. Essays on Dryden and History.	1828. George Meredith and D. G. Rossetti born.		1828. Irving's Life of Columbus.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—MACAULAY.—*Continued.*

Macaulay's Life.	Macaulay's Works.	Contemporary History.	English Literature.	American Literature.
1830. Member of Parliament for Calne.	1830. First speech in Parliament.	1830. William IV. king.	1830. Tennyson's Poems, chiefly Lyrical.	1830. Webster's Reply to Hayne.
	1831. Speeches on the Reform Bill. Essay on Boswell's Life of Johnson.	1831. Owen Meredith born.		
	1832. Essays on Burleigh and Mirabeau. Speeches on Parliamentary Reform, etc.	1832. Scott died. Leslie Stephen born.	1832. Tennyson's Poems.	1832. Irving's Alhambra.
1833. Member of Parliament for Leeds.	1833. Essay on Horace Walpole.		1833. Carlyle's Sartor Resartus.	1833. Longfellow's Outre-Mer.
1834. Sailed for India as member of the Supreme Council.	1834. Essay on the Earl of Chatham.	1834. Lamb and Coleridge died.	1834. Bulwer's Last Days of Pompeii.	1834. Bancroft's History of the United States, vol. i.
			1836–37. Dickens's Pickwick Papers.	1836. Holmes's Poems. Emerson's Nature.
		1837. Victoria queen. Green and Swinburne born.	1837. Carlyle's French Revolution.	1837. Prescott's Ferdinand and Isabella. Hawthorne's Twice Told Tales. Emerson's American Scholar.
1838. Returned from India.	1838. Essay on Sir William Temple.	1838. Zachary Macaulay died. John Morley and Walter Besant born.	1838. Dickens's Nicholas Nickleby.	
1839. Member of Parliament for Edinburgh. Visit to Italy. Secretary at War.	1839. Essay on Church and State. Speech at Edinburgh.			1839. Longfellow's Hyperion and Voices of the Night. Whittier's Ballads and Anti-slavery Poems.
	1840. Essays on Lord Clive and the History of the Popes.	1840. H. M. Stanley born.		1840. Poe's Tales. Dana's Two Years before the Mast.

1841. Re-elected to Parliament for Edinburgh.	1841. Essay on Warren Hastings.		1841. Browning's Pippa Passes. Carlyle's Hero Worship.	1841. Emerson's Essays, first series.
	1842. Lays of Ancient Rome.	1842. Dr. Arnold died.	1842. Tennyson's Poems.	
	1843. Essays on Madame D'Arblay and Addison.	1843. Southey died.	1843. Ruskin's Modern Painters, vol. i. Dickens's Martin Chuzzlewit.	1843. Prescott's Conquest of Mexico.
	1844. Essay on Earl of Chatham (the last *Edinburgh Review* essay).	1844. Campbell died.	1844. E. Barrett's (Mrs. Browning's) Poems.	
		1845. Hood died.		1845. Poe's Raven.
1846. Paymaster-General.				
1847. Defeated in Edinburgh election.			1847. Thackeray's Vanity Fair. Brontë's Jane Eyre. Tennyson's Princess.	1847. Longfellow's Evangeline.
	1848. History of England, vols. i. and ii.			1848. Lowell's Biglow Papers, first series, Vision of Sir Launfel, etc.
1849. Lord Rector of Glasgow University. Fellow of the Royal Society.	1849. Inaugural Speech at Glasgow.	1849. Poe died.		1849. Parkman's Oregon Trail. Whittier's Voices of Freedom.
		1850. Wordsworth died. R. L. Stevenson born. Tennyson poet laureate.	1850. Tennyson's In Memoriam. Mrs. Browning's Sonnets from the Portuguese.	1850. Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter.
		1851. Cooper died.		
1852. Elected to Parliament from Edinburgh without a canvass. Health began to fail.		1852. Webster and Moore died.	1852. Thackeray's Henry Esmond.	1852. Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin.
			1853. Kingsley's Hypatia.	
	1854. Life of John Bunyan.		1854. Thackeray's Newcomes.	

Macaulay's Life.	Macaulay's Works.	Contemporary History.	English Literature.	American Literature.
	1855. History of England, vols. iii. and iv.		1855. Tennyson's Maud. Arnold's poems.	1855. Longfellow's Hiawatha.
	1856. Lives of Oliver Goldsmith and Samuel Johnson.		1856. Froude's History of England, vols. i. and ii.	1856. Motley's Dutch Republic.
1857. Became Baron Macaulay of Rothley. Foreign Member of French Academy. Member of Prussian Order of Merit.				
1858. High Steward of Cambridge.			1858. Carlyle's Frederick the Great. Tennyson's Idylls of the King.	1858. Holmes's Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.
1859. Died December 28.	1859. Life of William Pitt.	1859. Irving, Prescott, De Quincey, Hunt, and Hallam died.	1859. Darwin's Origin of Species. George Eliot's Adam Bede.	

JOHNSON'S LIFE.	CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.
1709. Born.		1709. Seventh year of Queen Anne's reign.	1709. *The Tatler.*
1710. Touched by the Queen for scrofula.		1710. Trial of Sacheverell.	1709-10. Rowe's edition of Shakespeare.
	1711. Hume born.		1711. Pope's Essay on Criticism. *The Spectator.*
	1713. Sterne born.		1712. Pope's Rape of the Lock.
	1715. Wycherley died.	1714. George I. king.	1713. Addison's Cato.
	1716. Garrick and Gray born.		1715. Pope's Iliad.
			1717. Pope's Eloisa. Newton's Principia.
	1719. Addison died.		1719. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. Watts's Hymns.
	1720. Baron Munchausen born.	1720. South Sea Bubble.	
	1721. Prior died. Smollett born.		
	1723. Reynolds born.		1723. Pope's Odyssey.
			1726. Swift's Gulliver's Travels.
	1727. Newton died.	1727. George II. king. War with Austria and Spain.	
1728. Entered Pembroke College, Oxford.	1728. Goldsmith and Cook born.		1728. Pope's Dunciad.
1729. Returned home.	1729. Congreve and Steele died.		
	1730. Burke born.		1730. Thompson's Seasons.
1731. Father died.	1731. Defoe died. Cowper born.		
1732. Usher at Market Bosworth.	1732. Gay died.		1732. Pope's Essay on Man. Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac.
1734. Residence at Birmingham.			
1735. Marriage. School at Edial.	1735. Rob Roy died. Beattie born.		
1737. Removal to London. Irene written.	1737. Gibbon born.		

JOHNSON'S LIFE.	CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.
1738. Contributions begun to *The Gentleman's Magazine.*	1738. Macpherson born.	1738. First Methodists in London.	
	1739. Mrs. Thrale born		
	1740. Boswell born.	1740. Frederick, Emperor of Germany.	1740. Richardson's Pamela.
1740–43. Reports of Debates in the Senate of Lilliput.		1740–48. War of the Austrian Succession.	
			1741. Handel's Messiah.
			1742. Young's Night Thoughts. Fielding's Joseph Andrews.
	1743. Paley born.		
1744. Life of Savage.	1744. Pope died.		1744. Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination.
	1745. Swift died.		
		1746. Charles Edward defeated at Culloden.	1746. Collins's Odes.
1747. Prospectus of the Dictionary.			
			1748. Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe. Smollett's Roderick Random.
1749. The Vanity of Human Wishes. Irene acted.	1749. Charles James Fox born.		1749. Fielding's Tom Jones.
1750–52. *The Rambler.*		1750–60. Lord Clive in India.	
1751. Mrs. Johnson died.			1751. Gray's Elegy. Fielding's Amelia. Smollett's Peregrine Pickle.
	1752. Sheridan and Madame D'Arblay, born.		
	1754. Fielding died. Crabbe born.		1754. Hume's History of England, vol. i.
1755. The Dictionary published.		1755. Lisbon earthquake.	
		1756–63. Seven Years' War.	1756. Burke's Sublime and Beautiful.

1758-60. *The Idler*.			1757. Gray's Odes.
1759. Mother died. Rasselas.	1759. Burns and Pitt born.		1759. Sterne's Tristram Shandy.
	1760. Boswell's first visit to London.	1760. George III. king.	1760. Goldsmith's Citizen of the World.
	1761. Richardson died.		
1762. Pensioned.	1762. Lady Montagu died.		1762. Macpherson's Ossian.
1763. First meeting with Boswell.		1763. Wedgwood potteries established.	1763. Lady Montagu's Letters.
1764. The Club founded.	1764. Hogarth died.	1764. Spinning-Jenny invented.	1764. Walpole's Castle of Otranto.
1765. Degree of LL.D. Intimacy with the Thrales. Edition of Shakespeare.	1765. Young died.	1765. Stamp Act. Steam-engine invented.	
			1766. Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield.
	1767. Maria Edgeworth born.		
	1768. Sterne died.		1768. Goldsmith's Good-Natured Man. Sterne's Sentimental Journey.
	1769. Garrick died. Napoleon and Wellington born.		1769. Letters of Junius.
	1770. Wordsworth born.		1770. Goldsmith's Deserted Village.
	1771. Smollett and Gray died. Scott born.		1771. Smollett's Humphrey Clinker. Beginning of great English journals.
	1772. Coleridge born. Swedenborg died.		
1773. Journey to the Hebrides.		1773. Boston Tea Party.	1773. Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer.
1774. Tour to North Wales.	1774. Southey born. Goldsmith died.		
1775. Journey to the Hebrides, and Taxation no Tyranny. Degree of D.C.L. Visit to Paris.	1775. Lamb, Jane Austen, and Landor born.	1775. Battle of Bunker Hill.	1775. Sheridan's Rivals.
	1776. Hume died.	1776. American Declaration of Independence.	1776. Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Smith's Wealth of Nations.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—JOHNSON.—*Concluded.*

JOHNSON'S LIFE.	CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY.	CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.
1777–81. Lives of the Poets.	1777. Campbell born.	1777. Burgoyne's surrender.	1777. Sheridan's School for Scandal.
	1778. Hazlitt and Hallam born. Voltaire and Chatham died.		
	1779. Capt. Cook died. Moore born.		
	1782. Webster born.		
	1783. Irving born.	1783. Peace with America.	1783. Crabbe's Village.
1784. Died.		1784. Mail coaches used.	1786. Burns's Poems.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

(DECEMBER, 1856)

1. Samuel Johnson, one of the most eminent English writers of the eighteenth century, was the son of Michael Johnson, who was, at the beginning of that century, a magistrate of Lichfield, and a bookseller of great note in the midland counties. Michael's abilities and attainments seem to have been considerable. He was so well acquainted with the contents of the volumes which he exposed to sale, that the country rectors of Staffordshire and Worcestershire thought him an oracle on points of learning. Between him and the clergy, indeed, there was a strong religious and political sympathy. He was a zealous churchman, and, though he had qualified himself for municipal office by taking the oaths to the sovereigns in possession, was to the last a Jacobite in heart. At his house, a house which is still pointed out to every traveller who visits Lichfield, Samuel was born on the 18th of September, 1709. In the child, the physical, intellectual, and moral peculiarities which afterwards distinguished the man were plainly discernible; great muscular strength accompanied by much awkwardness and many infirmities; great quickness of parts, with a morbid propensity to sloth and procrastination; a kind and generous heart, with a gloomy and irritable temper. He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint, which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. His parents were weak enough to believe that the royal touch was a specific for this malady. In his third year he was taken up to London, inspected by the

court surgeon, prayed over by the court chaplains, and stroked and presented with a piece of gold by Queen Anne. One of his earliest recollections was that of a stately lady in a diamond stomacher and a long black hood. Her hand was applied in vain. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular, were distorted by his malady. His cheeks were deeply scarred. He lost for a time the sight of one eye; and he saw but very imperfectly with the other. But the force of his mind overcame every impediment. Indolent as he was, he acquired knowledge with such ease and rapidity that at every school to which he was sent he was soon the best scholar. From sixteen to eighteen he resided at home, and was left to his own devices. He learned much at this time, though his studies were without guidance and without plan. He ransacked his father's shelves, dipped into a multitude of books, read what was interesting, and passed over what was dull. An ordinary lad would have acquired little or no useful knowledge in such a way: but much that was dull to ordinary lads was interesting to Samuel. He read little Greek: for his proficiency in that language was not such that he could take much pleasure in the masters of Attic poetry and eloquence. But he had left school a good Latinist; and he soon acquired, in the large and miscellaneous library of which he now had the command, an extensive knowledge of Latin literature. That Augustan delicacy of taste which is the boast of the great public schools of England he never possessed. But he was early familiar with some classical writers who were quite unknown to the best scholars in the sixth form at Eton. He was peculiarly attracted by the works of the great restorers of learning. Once, while searching for some apples, he found a huge folio volume of Petrarch's works. The name excited his curiosity; and he eagerly devoured hundreds of pages. Indeed, the diction and versification of his own

Latin compositions show that he had paid at least as much attention to modern copies from the antique as to the original models.

2. While he was thus irregularly educating himself, his family was sinking into hopeless poverty. Old Michael Johnson was much better qualified to pore upon books, and to talk about them, than to trade in them. His business declined; his debts increased; it was with difficulty that the daily expenses of his household were defrayed. It was out of his power to support his son at either university; but a wealthy neighbour offered assistance; and, in reliance on promises which proved to be of very little value, Samuel was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. When the young scholar presented himself to the rulers of that society, they were amazed not more by his ungainly figure and eccentric manners than by the quantity of extensive and curious information which he had picked up during many months of desultory but not unprofitable study. On the first day of his residence he surprised his teachers by quoting Macrobius; and one of the most learned among them declared that he had never known a freshman of equal attainments.

3. At Oxford, Johnson resided during about three years. He was poor, even to raggedness; and his appearance excited a mirth and a pity which were equally intolerable to his haughty spirit. He was driven from the quadrangle of Christ Church by the sneering looks which the members of that aristocratical society cast at the holes in his shoes. Some charitable person placed a new pair at his door; but he spurned them away in a fury. Distress made him, not servile, but reckless and ungovernable. No opulent gentleman commoner, panting for one-and-twenty, could have treated the academical authorities with more gross disrespect. The needy scholar was generally to be seen under the gate of Pembroke, a gate now adorned

with his effigy, haranguing a circle of lads, over whom, in spite of his tattered gown and dirty linen, his wit and audacity gave him an undisputed ascendency. In every mutiny against the discipline of the college he was the ringleader. Much was pardoned, however, to a youth so highly distinguished by abilities and acquirements. He had early made himself known by turning Pope's "Messiah" into Latin verse. The style and rhythm, indeed, were not exactly Virgilian; but the translation found many admirers, and was read with pleasure by Pope himself.

4. The time drew near at which Johnson would, in the ordinary course of things, have become a Bachelor of Arts: but he was at the end of his resources. Those promises of support on which he had relied had not been kept. His family could do nothing for him. His debts to Oxford tradesmen were small indeed, yet larger than he could pay. In the autumn of 1731, he was under the necessity of quitting the university without a degree. In the following winter his father died. The old man left but a pittance; and of that pittance almost the whole was appropriated to the support of his widow. The property to which Samuel succeeded amounted to no more than twenty pounds.

5. His life, during the thirty years which followed, was one hard struggle with poverty. The misery of that struggle needed no aggravation, but was aggravated by the sufferings of an unsound body and an unsound mind. Before the young man left the university, his hereditary malady had broken forth in a singularly cruel form. He had become an incurable hypochondriac. He said long after that he had been mad all his life, or at least not perfectly sane; and, in truth, eccentricities less strange than his have often been thought grounds sufficient for absolving felons, and for setting aside wills. His grimaces, his gestures, his mutterings, sometimes diverted and sometimes

terrified people who did not know him. At a dinner table he would, in a fit of absence, stoop down and twitch off a lady's shoe. He would amaze a drawing-room by suddenly ejaculating a clause of the Lord's Prayer. He would conceive an unintelligible aversion to a particular alley, and perform a great circuit rather than see the hateful place. He would set his heart on touching every post in the streets through which he walked. If by any chance he missed a post, he would go back a hundred yards and repair the omission. Under the influence of his disease, his senses became morbidly torpid, and his imagination morbidly active. At one time he would stand poring on the town clock without being able to tell the hour. At another, he would distinctly hear his mother, who was many miles off, calling him by his name. But this was not the worst. A deep melancholy took possession of him, and gave a dark tinge to all his views of human nature and of human destiny. Such wretchedness as he endured has driven many men to shoot themselves or drown themselves. But he was under no temptation to commit suicide. He was sick of life; but he was afraid of death; and he shuddered at every sight or sound which reminded him of the inevitable hour. In religion he found but little comfort during his long and frequent fits of dejection; for his religion partook of his own character. The light from heaven shone on him indeed, but not in a direct line, or with its own pure splendour. The rays had to struggle through a disturbing medium; they reached him refracted, dulled and discoloured by the thick gloom which had settled on his soul; and, though they might be sufficiently clear to guide him, were too dim to cheer him.

6. With such infirmities of body and mind, this celebrated man was left, at two-and-twenty, to fight his way through the world. He remained during about five years in the midland counties. At Lichfield, his birthplace and

his early home, he had inherited some friends and acquired others. He was kindly noticed by Henry Hervey, a gay officer of noble family, who happened to be quartered there. Gilbert Walmesley, registrar of the ecclesiastical court of the diocese, a man of distinguished parts, learning, and knowledge of the world, did himself honour by patronising the young adventurer, whose repulsive person, unpolished manners, and squalid garb moved many of the petty aristocracy of the neighbourhood to laughter or to disgust. At Lichfield, however, Johnson could find no way of earning a livelihood. He became usher of a grammar school in Leicestershire; he resided as a humble companion in the house of a country gentleman; but a life of dependence was insupportable to his haughty spirit. He repaired to Birmingham, and there earned a few guineas by literary drudgery. In that town he printed a translation, little noticed at the time, and long forgotten, of a Latin book about Abyssinia. He then put forth proposals for publishing by subscription the poems of Politian, with notes containing a history of modern Latin verse: but subscriptions did not come in; and the volume never appeared.

7. While leading this vagrant and miserable life, Johnson fell in love. The object of his passion was Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, a widow who had children as old as himself. To ordinary spectators, the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman, painted half an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colours, and fond of exhibiting provincial airs and graces which were not exactly those of the Queensberrys and Lepels. To Johnson, however, whose passions were strong, whose eyesight was too weak to distinguish ceruse from natural bloom, and who had seldom or never been in the same room with a woman of real fashion, his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. That his admiration was unfeigned

cannot be doubted; for she was as poor as himself. She accepted, with a readiness which did her little honour, the addresses of a suitor who might have been her son. The marriage, however, in spite of occasional wranglings, proved happier than might have been expected. The lover continued to be under the illusions of the wedding-day till the lady died in her sixty-fourth year. On her monument he placed an inscription extolling the charms of her person and of her manners; and when, long after her decease, he had occasion to mention her, he exclaimed, with a tenderness half ludicrous, half pathetic, "Pretty creature!"

8. His marriage made it necessary for him to exert himself more strenuously than he had hitherto done. He took a house in the neighbourhood of his native town, and advertised for pupils. But eighteen months passed away; and only three pupils came to his academy. Indeed, his appearance was so strange, and his temper so violent, that his schoolroom must have resembled an ogre's den. Nor was the tawdry painted grandmother whom he called his Titty well qualified to make provision for the comfort of young gentlemen. David Garrick, who was one of the pupils, used, many years later, to throw the best company of London into convulsions of laughter by mimicking the endearments of this extraordinary pair.

9. At length Johnson, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, determined to seek his fortune in the capital as a literary adventurer. He set out with a few guineas, three acts of the tragedy of "Irene" in manuscript, and two or three letters of introduction from his friend Walmesley.

10. Never, since literature became a calling in England, had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London. In the preceding generation a writer of eminent merit was sure to be munificently rewarded by the government. The least that

he could expect was a pension or a sinecure place; and, if he showed any aptitude for politics, he might hope to be a member of parliament, a lord of the treasury, an ambassador, a secretary of state. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name several writers of the nineteenth century of whom the least successful has received forty thousand pounds from the booksellers. But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity. Literature had ceased to flourish under the patronage of the great, and had not begun to flourish under the patronage of the public. One man of letters, indeed, Pope, had acquired by his pen what was then considered as a handsome fortune, and lived on a footing of equality with nobles and ministers of state. But this was a solitary exception. Even an author whose reputation was established, and whose works were popular, such an author as Thomson, whose "Seasons" were in every library, such an author as Fielding, whose "Pasquin" had had a greater run than any drama since "The Beggar's Opera," was sometimes glad to obtain, by pawning his best coat, the means of dining on tripe at a cookshop underground, where he could wipe his hands, after his greasy meal, on the back of a Newfoundland dog. It is easy, therefore, to imagine what humiliations and privations must have awaited the novice who had still to earn a name. One of the publishers to whom Johnson applied for employment measured with a scornful eye that athletic though uncouth frame, and exclaimed, "You had better get a porter's knot, and carry trunks." Nor was the advice bad; for a porter was likely to be as plentifully fed, and as comfortably lodged, as a poet.

11. Some time appears to have elapsed before Johnson was able to form any literary connection from which he could expect more than bread for the day which was passing over him. He never forgot the generosity with which Hervey,

who was now residing in London, relieved his wants during this time of trial. "Harry Hervey," said the old philosopher many years later, "was a vicious man; but he was very kind to me. If you call a dog Hervey I shall love him." At Hervey's table Johnson sometimes enjoyed feasts which were made more agreeable by contrast. But in general he dined, and thought that he dined well, on sixpenny worth of meat, and a pennyworth of bread, at an alehouse near Drury Lane.

12. The effect of the privations and sufferings which he endured at this time was discernible to the last in his temper and his deportment. His manners had never been courtly. They now became almost savage. Being frequently under the necessity of wearing shabby coats and dirty shirts, he became a confirmed sloven. Being often very hungry when he sat down to his meals, he contracted a habit of eating with ravenous greediness. Even to the end of his life, and even at the tables of the great, the sight of food affected him as it affects wild beasts and birds of prey. His taste in cookery, formed in subterranean ordinaries and alamode beefshops, was far from delicate. Whenever he was so fortunate as to have near him a hare that had been kept too long, or a meat pie made with rancid butter, he gorged himself with such violence that his veins swelled, and the moisture broke out on his forehead. The affronts which his poverty emboldened stupid and low-minded men to offer to him would have broken a mean spirit into sycophancy, but made him rude even to ferocity. Unhappily the insolence which, while it was defensive, was pardonable, and in some sense respectable, accompanied him into societies where he was treated with courtesy and kindness. He was repeatedly provoked into striking those who had taken liberties with him. All the sufferers, however, were wise enough to abstain from talking about their beatings, ex-

cept Osborne, the most rapacious and brutal of booksellers, who proclaimed everywhere that he had been knocked down by the huge fellow whom he had hired to puff the Harleian Library.

13. About a year after Johnson had begun to reside in London, he was fortunate enough to obtain regular employment from Cave, an enterprising and intelligent bookseller, who was proprietor and editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. That journal, just entering on the ninth year of its long existence, was the only periodical work in the kingdom which then had what would now be called a large circulation. It was, indeed, the chief source of parliamentary intelligence. It was not then safe, even during a recess, to publish an account of the proceedings of either House without some disguise. Cave, however, ventured to entertain his readers with what he called "Reports of the Debates of the Senate of Lilliput." France was Blefuscu; London was Mildendo: pounds were sprugs: the Duke of Newcastle was the Nardac secretary of State: Lord Hardwicke was the Hurgo Hickrad: and William Pulteney was Wingul Pulnub. To write the speeches was, during several years, the business of Johnson. He was generally furnished with notes, meagre indeed, and inaccurate, of what had been said; but sometimes he had to find arguments and eloquence both for the ministry and for the opposition. He was himself a Tory, not from rational conviction—for his serious opinion was that one form of government was just as good or as bad as another—but from mere passion, such as inflamed the Capulets against the Montagues, or the Blues of the Roman circus against the Greens. In his infancy he had heard so much talk about the villanies of the Whigs, and the dangers of the Church, that he had become a furious partisan when he could scarcely speak. Before he was three he had insisted on being taken to hear Sacheverell preach at Lichfield

Cathedral, and had listened to the sermon with as much respect, and probably with as much intelligence, as any Staffordshire squire in the congregation. The work which had been begun in the nursery had been completed by the university. Oxford, when Johnson resided there, was the most Jacobitical place in England; and Pembroke was one of the most Jacobitical colleges in Oxford. The prejudices which he brought up to London were scarcely less absurd than those of his own Tom Tempest. Charles II. and James II. were two of the best kings that ever reigned. Laud, a poor creature who never did, said, or wrote anything indicating more than the ordinary capacity of an old woman, was a prodigy of parts and learning over whose tomb Art and Genius still continued to weep. Hampden deserved no more honourable name than that of "the zealot of rebellion." Even the ship money, condemned not less decidedly by Falkland and Clarendon than by the bitterest Roundheads, Johnson would not pronounce to have been an unconstitutional impost. Under a government, the mildest that had ever been known in the world — under a government, which allowed to the people an unprecedented liberty of speech and action—he fancied that he was a slave; he assailed the ministry with obloquy which refuted itself, and regretted the lost freedom and happiness of those golden days in which a writer who had taken but one-tenth part of the license allowed to him would have been pilloried, mangled with the shears, whipped at the cart's tail, and flung into a noisome dungeon to die. He hated dissenters and stockjobbers, the excise and the army, septennial parliaments, and continental connections. He long had an aversion to the Scotch, an aversion of which he could not remember the commencement, but which, he owned, had probably originated in his abhorrence of the conduct of the nation during the Great Rebellion. It is easy to guess in what manner debates

on great party questions were likely to be reported by a man whose judgment was so much disordered by party spirit. A show of fairness was indeed necessary to the prosperity of the *Magazine*. But Johnson long afterwards owned that, though he had saved appearances, he had taken care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it; and, in fact, every passage which has lived, every passage which bears the marks of his higher faculties, is put into the mouth of some member of the opposition.

14. A few weeks after Johnson had entered on these obscure labours, he published a work which at once placed him high among the writers of his age. It is probable that what he had suffered during his first year in London had often reminded him of some parts of that noble poem in which Juvenal had described the misery and degradation of a needy man of letters, lodged among the pigeons' nests in the tottering garrets which overhung the streets of Rome. Pope's admirable imitations of Horace's "Satires" and "Epistles" had recently appeared, were in every hand, and were by many readers thought superior to the originals. What Pope had done for Horace, Johnson aspired to do for Juvenal. The enterprise was bold and yet judicious. For between Johnson and Juvenal there was much in common, much more certainly than between Pope and Horace.

15. Johnson's "London" appeared without his name in May, 1738. He received only ten guineas for this stately and vigorous poem; but the sale was rapid, and the success complete. A second edition was required within a week. Those small critics who are always desirous to lower established reputations ran about proclaiming that the anonymous satirist was superior to Pope in Pope's own peculiar department of literature. It ought to be remembered, to the honour of Pope, that he joined heartily in the applause with which the appearance of a rival genius was welcomed. He made inquiries about the author of "Lon-

don." Such a man, he said, could not long be concealed. The name was soon discovered; and Pope, with great kindness, exerted himself to obtain an academical degree and the mastership of a grammar school for the poor young poet. The attempt failed; and Johnson remained a bookseller's hack.

16. It does not appear that these two men, the most eminent writer of the generation which was going out, and the most eminent writer of the generation which was coming in, ever saw each other. They lived in very different circles, one surrounded by dukes and earls, the other by starving pamphleteers and index makers. Among Johnson's associates at this time may be mentioned Boyse, who, when his shirts were pledged, scrawled Latin verses sitting up in bed with his arms through two holes in his blanket; who composed very respectable sacred poetry when he was sober; and who was at last run over by a hackney coach when he was drunk: Hoole, surnamed the metaphysical tailor, who, instead of attending to his measures, used to trace geometrical diagrams on the board where he sate cross-legged; and the penitent impostor, George Psalmanazar, who, after poring all day, in a humble lodging, on the folios of Jewish rabbis and Christian fathers, indulged himself at night with literary and theological conversation at an alehouse in the city. But the most remarkable of the persons with whom at this time Johnson consorted was Richard Savage, an earl's son, a shoemaker's apprentice, who had seen life in all its forms, who had feasted among blue ribands in Saint James's Square, and had lain with fifty pounds' weight of iron on his legs in the condemned ward of Newgate. This man had, after many vicissitudes of fortune, sunk at last into abject and hopeless poverty. His pen had failed him. His patrons had been taken away by death, or estranged by the riotous profusion with which he squandered their

bounty, and the ungrateful insolence with which he rejected their advice. He now lived by begging. He dined on venison and champagne whenever he had been so fortunate as to borrow a guinea. If his questing had been unsuccessful, he appeased the rage of hunger with some scraps of broken meat, and lay down to rest under the Piazza of Covent Garden in warm weather, and, in cold weather, as near as he could get to the furnace of a glass house. Yet, in his misery, he was still an agreeable companion. He had an inexhaustible store of anecdotes about that gay and brilliant world from which he was now an outcast. He had observed the great men of both parties in hours of careless relaxation, had seen the leaders of opposition without the mask of patriotism, and had heard the prime minister roar with laughter and tell stories not over decent. During some months Savage lived in the closest familiarity with Johnson; and then the friends parted, not without tears. Johnson remained in London to drudge for Cave. Savage went to the West of England, lived there as he had lived everywhere, and, in 1743, died, penniless and heart-broken, in Bristol gaol.

17. Soon after his death, while the public curiosity was strongly excited about his extraordinary character, and his not less extraordinary adventures, a life of him appeared widely different from the catchpenny lives of eminent men which were then a staple article of manufacture in Grub Street. The style was indeed deficient in ease and variety; and the writer was evidently too partial to the Latin element of our language. But the little work, with all its faults, was a masterpiece. No finer specimen of literary biography existed in any language, living or dead; and a discerning critic might have confidently predicted that the author was destined to be the founder of a new school of English eloquence.

18. The life of Savage was anonymous; but it was well

known in literary circles that Johnson was the writer. During the three years which followed, he produced no important work; but he was not, and indeed could not be, idle. The fame of his abilities and learning continued to grow. Warburton pronounced him a man of parts and genius; and the praise of Warburton was then no light thing. Such was Johnson's reputation that, in 1747, several eminent booksellers combined to employ him in the arduous work of preparing a Dictionary of the English language, in two folio volumes. The sum which they agreed to pay him was only fifteen hundred guineas; and out of this sum he had to pay several poor men of letters who assisted him in the humbler parts of his task.

19. The prospectus of the "Dictionary" he addressed to the Earl of Chesterfield. Chesterfield had long been celebrated for the politeness of his manners, the brilliancy of his wit, and the delicacy of his taste. He was acknowledged to be the finest speaker in the House of Lords. He had recently governed Ireland, at a momentous conjuncture, with eminent firmness, wisdom, and humanity; and he had since become Secretary of State. He received Johnson's homage with the most winning affability, and requited it with a few guineas, bestowed doubtless in a very graceful manner, but was by no means desirous to see all his carpets blackened with the London mud, and his soups and wines thrown to right and left over the gowns of fine ladies and the waistcoats of fine gentlemen, by an absent, awkward scholar, who gave strange starts and uttered strange growls, who dressed like a scarecrow, and ate like a cormorant. During some time Johnson continued to call on his patron, but after being repeatedly told by the porter that his lordship was not at home, took the hint, and ceased to present himself at the inhospitable door.

20. Johnson had flattered himself that he should have completed his "Dictionary" by the end of 1750; but it

was not till 1755 that he at length gave his huge volumes to the world. During the seven years which he passed in the drudgery of penning definitions and marking quotations for transcription, he sought for relaxation in literary labour of a more agreeable kind. In 1749 he published the "Vanity of Human Wishes," an excellent imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. It is in truth not easy to say whether the palm belongs to the ancient or to the modern poet. The couplets in which the fall of Wolsey is described, though lofty and sonorous, are feeble when compared with the wonderful lines which bring before us all Rome in tumult on the day of the fall of Sejanus, the laurels on the doorposts, the white bull stalking towards the Capitol, the statues rolling down from their pedestals, the flatterers of the disgraced minister running to see him dragged with a hook through the streets, and to have a kick at his carcase before it is hurled into the Tiber. It must be owned, too, that in the concluding passage the Christian moralist has not made the most of his advantages, and has fallen decidedly short of the sublimity of his Pagan model. On the other hand, Juvenal's Hannibal must yield to Johnson's Charles; and Johnson's vigorous and pathetic enumeration of the miseries of a literary life must be allowed to be superior to Juvenal's lamentation over the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero.

21. For the copyright of the "Vanity of Human Wishes" Johnson received only fifteen guineas.

22. A few days after the publication of this poem, his tragedy, begun many years before, was brought on the stage. His pupil, David Garrick, had, in 1741, made his appearance on a humble stage in Goodman's Fields, had at once risen to the first place among actors, and was now, after several years of almost uninterrupted success, manager of Drury Lane Theatre. The relation between him

and his old preceptor was of a very singular kind. They repelled each other strongly, and yet attracted each other strongly. Nature had made them of very different clay; and circumstances had fully brought out the natural peculiarities of both. Sudden prosperity had turned Garrick's head. Continued adversity had soured Johnson's temper. Johnson saw with more envy than became so great a man the villa, the plate, the china, the Brussels carpets which the little mimic had got by repeating, with grimaces and gesticulations, what wiser men had written; and the exquisitely sensitive vanity of Garrick was galled by the thought that, while all the rest of the world was applauding him, he could obtain from one morose cynic, whose opinion it was impossible to despise, scarcely any compliment not acidulated with scorn. Yet the two Lichfield men had so many early recollections in common, and sympathised with each other on so many points on which they sympathised with nobody else in the vast population of the capital, that, though the master was often provoked by the monkey-like impertinence of the pupil, and the pupil by the bearish rudeness of the master, they remained friends till they were parted by death. Garrick now brought "Irene" out, with alterations sufficient to displease the author, yet not sufficient to make the piece pleasing to the audience. The public, however, listened with little emotion, but with much civility, to five acts of monotonous declamation. After nine representations the play was withdrawn. It is, indeed, altogether unsuited to the stage, and, even when perused in the closet, will be found hardly worthy of the author. He had not the slightest notion of what blank verse should be. A change in the last syllable of every other line would make the versification of the "Vanity of Human Wishes" closely resemble the versification of "Irene." The poet, however, cleared, by his benefit nights, and by the sale of the copy-

right of his tragedy, about three hundred pounds, then a great sum in his estimation.

23. About a year after the representation of "Irene," he began to publish a series of short essays on morals, manners, and literature. This species of composition had been brought into fashion by the success of the *Tatler*, and by the still more brilliant success of the *Spectator*. A crowd of small writers had vainly attempted to rival Addison. The *Lay Monastery*, the *Censor*, the *Freethinker*, the *Plain Dealer*, the *Champion*, and other works of the same kind, had had their short day. None of them had obtained a permanent place in our literature; and they are now to be found only in the libraries of the curious. At length Johnson undertook the adventure in which so many aspirants had failed. In the thirty-sixth year after the appearance of the last number of the *Spectator*, appeared the first number of the *Rambler*. From March 1750 to March 1752, this paper continued to come out every Tuesday and Saturday.

24. From the first the *Rambler* was enthusiastically admired by a few eminent men. Richardson, when only five numbers had appeared, pronounced it equal, if not superior, to the *Spectator*. Young and Hartley expressed their approbation not less warmly. Bubb Doddington, among whose many faults indifference to the claims of genius and learning cannot be reckoned, solicited the acquaintance of the writer. In consequence probably of the good offices of Doddington, who was then the confidential adviser of Prince Frederic, two of His Royal Highness's gentlemen carried a gracious message to the printing office, and ordered seven copies for Leicester House. But these overtures seem to have been very coldly received. Johnson had had enough of the patronage of the great to last him all his life, and was not disposed to haunt any other door as he had haunted the door of Chesterfield.

25. By the public the *Rambler* was at first very coldly received. Though the price of a number was only twopence, the sale did not amount to five hundred. The profits were therefore very small. But as soon as the flying leaves were collected and reprinted, they became popular. The author lived to see thirteen thousand copies spread over England alone. Separate editions were published for the Scotch and Irish markets. A large party pronounced the style perfect, so absolutely perfect that in some essays it would be impossible for the writer himself to alter a single word for the better. Another party, not less numerous, vehemently accused him of having corrupted the purity of the English tongue. The best critics admitted that his diction was too monotonous, too obviously artificial, and now and then turgid even to absurdity. But they did justice to the acuteness of his observations on morals and manners, to the constant precision and frequent brilliancy of his language, to the weighty and magnificent eloquence of many serious passages, and to the solemn yet pleasing humour of some of the lighter papers. On the question of precedence between Addison and Johnson, a question which, seventy years ago, was much disputed, posterity has pronounced a decision from which there is no appeal. Sir Roger, his chaplain and his butler, Will Wimble and Will Honeycomb, the Vision of Mirza, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Everlasting Club, the Dunmow Flitch, the Loves of Hilpah and Shalum, the Visit to the Exchange, and the Visit to the Abbey, are known to everybody. But many men and women, even of highly cultivated minds, are unacquainted with Squire Bluster and Mrs. Busy, Quisquilius and Venustulus, the Allegory of Wit and Learning, the Chronicle of the Revolutions of a Garret, and the sad fate of Aningait and Ajut.

26. The last *Rambler* was written in a sad and gloomy hour. Mrs. Johnson had been given over by the physi-

cians. Three days later she died. She left her husband almost broken-hearted. Many people had been surprised to see a man of his genius and learning stooping to every drudgery, and denying himself almost every comfort, for the purpose of supplying a silly, affected old woman with superfluities, which she accepted with but little gratitude. But all his affection had been concentrated on her. He had neither brother nor sister, neither son nor daughter. To him she was beautiful as the Gunnings, and witty as Lady Mary. Her opinion of his writings was more important to him than the voice of the pit of Drury Lane Theatre or the judgment of the *Monthly Review*. The chief support which had sustained him through the most arduous labour of his life was the hope that she would enjoy the fame and the profit which he anticipated from his "Dictionary." She was gone; and in that vast labyrinth of streets, peopled by eight hundred thousand human beings, he was alone. Yet it was necessary for him to set himself, as he expressed it, doggedly to work. After three more laborious years, the "Dictionary" was at length complete.

27. It had been generally supposed that this great work would be dedicated to the eloquent and accomplished nobleman to whom the prospectus had been addressed. He well knew the value of such a compliment; and therefore, when the day of publication drew near, he exerted himself to soothe, by a show of zealous and at the same time of delicate and judicious kindness, the pride which he had so cruelly wounded. Since the *Ramblers* had ceased to appear, the town had been entertained by a journal called the *World*, to which many men of high rank and fashion contributed. In two successive numbers of the *World* the "Dictionary" was, to use the modern phrase, puffed with wonderful skill. The writings of Johnson were warmly praised. It was proposed that he

should be invested with the authority of a Dictator, nay, of a Pope, over our language, and that his decisions about the meaning and the spelling of words should be received as final. His two folios, it was said, would of course be bought by everybody who could afford to buy them. It was soon known that these papers were written by Chesterfield. But the just resentment of Johnson was not to be so appeased. In a letter written with singular energy and dignity of thought and language, he repelled the tardy advances of his patron. The "Dictionary" came forth without a dedication. In the preface the author truly declared that he owed nothing to the great, and described the difficulties with which he had been left to struggle so forcibly and pathetically that the ablest and most malevolent of all the enemies of his fame, Horne Tooke, never could read that passage without tears.

28. The public, on this occasion, did Johnson full justice, and something more than justice. The best lexicographer may well be content if his productions are received by the world with cold esteem. But Johnson's "Dictionary" was hailed with an enthusiasm such as no similar work has ever excited. It was indeed the first dictionary which could be read with pleasure. The definitions show so much acuteness of thought and command of language, and the passages quoted from poets, divines, and philosophers are so skilfully selected, that a leisure hour may always be very agreeably spent in turning over the pages. The faults of the book resolve themselves, for the most part, into one great fault. Johnson was a wretched etymologist. He knew little or nothing of any Teutonic language except English, which indeed, as he wrote it, was scarcely a Teutonic language; and thus he was absolutely at the mercy of Junius and Skinner.

29. The "Dictionary," though it raised Johnson's fame, added nothing to his pecuniary means. The fifteen

hundred guineas which the booksellers had agreed to pay him had been advanced and spent before the last sheets issued from the press. It is painful to relate that, twice in the course of the year which followed the publication of this great work, he was arrested and carried to spunging-houses, and that he was twice indebted for his liberty to his excellent friend Richardson. It was still necessary for the man who had been formally saluted by the highest authority as Dictator of the English language to supply his wants by constant toil. He abridged his "Dictionary." He proposed to bring out an edition of Shakspeare by subscription; and many subscribers sent in their names and laid down their money; but he soon found the task so little to his taste that he turned to more attractive employments. He contributed many papers to a new monthly journal, which was called the *Literary Magazine*. Few of these papers have much interest; but among them was the very best thing that he ever wrote, a masterpiece both of reasoning and of satirical pleasantry, the review of Jenyns's "Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil."

30. In the spring of 1758 Johnson put forth the first of a series of essays, entitled the *Idler*. During two years these essays continued to appear weekly. They were eagerly read, widely circulated, and, indeed, impudently pirated, while they were still in the original form, and had a large sale when collected into volumes. The *Idler* may be described as a second part of the *Rambler*, somewhat livelier and somewhat weaker than the first part.

31. While Johnson was busy with his *Idlers*, his mother, who had accomplished her ninetieth year, died at Lichfield. It was long since he had seen her; but he had not failed to contribute largely, out of his small means, to her comfort. In order to defray the charges of her funeral, and to pay some debts which she had left, he wrote a little book in a single week, and sent off the sheets to the press

without reading them over. A hundred pounds were paid him for the copyright; and the purchasers had great cause to be pleased with their bargain; for the book was "Rasselas."

32. The success of "Rasselas" was great, though such ladies as Miss Lydia Languish must have been grievously disappointed when they found that the new volume from the circulating library was little more than a dissertation on the author's favourite theme, the "Vanity of Human Wishes"; that the Prince of Abyssinia was without a mistress, and the princess without a lover; and that the story set the hero and the heroine down exactly where it had taken them up. The style was the subject of much eager controversy. The *Monthly Review* and the *Critical Review* took different sides. Many readers pronounced the writer a pompous pedant, who would never use a word of two syllables where it was possible to use a word of six, and who could not make a waiting woman relate her adventures without balancing every noun with another noun, and every epithet with another epithet. Another party, not less zealous, cited with delight numerous passages in which weighty meaning was expressed with accuracy and illustrated with splendour. And both the censure and the praise were merited.

33. About the plan of "Rasselas" little was said by the critics; and yet the faults of the plan might seem to invite severe criticism. Johnson has frequently blamed Shakspeare for neglecting the proprieties of time and place, and for ascribing to one age or nation the manners and opinions of another. Yet Shakspeare has not sinned in this way more grievously than Johnson. Rasselas and Imlac, Nekayah and Pekuah, are evidently meant to be Abyssinians of the eighteenth century: for the Europe which Imlac describes is the Europe of the eighteenth century; and the inmates of the Happy Valley talk familiarly

of that law of gravitation which Newton discovered, and which was not fully received even at Cambridge till the eighteenth century. What a real company of Abyssinians would have been may be learned from Bruce's "Travels." But Johnson, not content with turning filthy savages, ignorant of their letters, and gorged with raw steaks cut from living cows, into philosophers as eloquent and enlightened as himself or his friend Burke, and into ladies as highly accomplished as Mrs. Lennox or Mrs. Sheridan, transferred the whole domestic system of England to Egypt. Into a land of harems, a land of polygamy, a land where women are married without ever being seen, he introduced the flirtations and jealousies of our ball-rooms. In a land where there is boundless liberty of divorce, wedlock is described as the indissoluble compact. "A youth and maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of each other. Such," says Rasselas, "is the common process of marriage." Such it may have been, and may still be, in London, but assuredly not at Cairo. A writer who was guilty of such improprieties had little right to blame the poet who made Hector quote Aristotle, and represented Julio Romano as flourishing in the days of the oracle of Delphi.

34. By such exertions as have been described, Johnson supported himself till the year 1762. In that year a great change in his circumstances took place. He had from a child been an enemy of the reigning dynasty. His Jacobite prejudices had been exhibited with little disguise both in his works and in his conversation. Even in his massy and elaborate "Dictionary," he had, with a strange want of taste and judgment, inserted bitter and contumelious reflections on the Whig party. The excise, which was a favourite resource of Whig financiers, he had designated as a hateful tax. He had railed against the commissioners

of excise in language so coarse that they had seriously thought of prosecuting him. He had with difficulty been prevented from holding up the Lord Privy Seal by name as an example of the meaning of the word "renegade." A pension he had defined as pay given to a state hireling to betray his country; a pensioner as a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey a master. It seemed unlikely that the author of these definitions would himself be pensioned. But that was a time of wonders. George the Third had ascended the throne; and had, in the course of a few months, disgusted many of the old friends and conciliated many of the old enemies of his house. The city was becoming mutinous. Oxford was becoming loyal. Cavendishes and Bentincks were murmuring. Somersets and Wyndhams were hastening to kiss hands. The head of the treasury was now Lord Bute, who was a Tory, and could have no objection to Johnson's Toryism. Bute wished to be thought a patron of men of letters; and Johnson was one of the most eminent and one of the most needy men of letters in Europe. A pension of three hundred a year was graciously offered, and with very little hesitation accepted.

35. This event produced a change in Johnson's whole way of life. For the first time since his boyhood he no longer felt the daily goad urging him to the daily toil. He was at liberty, after thirty years of anxiety and drudgery, to indulge his constitutional indolence, to lie in bed till two in the afternoon, and to sit up talking till four in the morning, without fearing either the printer's devil or the sheriff's officer.

36. One laborious task indeed he had bound himself to perform. He had received large subscriptions for his promised edition of Shakspeare; he had lived on those subscriptions during some years: and he could not without disgrace omit to perform his part of the contract. His

friends repeatedly exhorted him to make an effort; and he repeatedly resolved to do so. But, notwithstanding their exhortations and his resolutions, month followed month, year followed year, and nothing was done. He prayed fervently against his idleness; he determined, as often as he received the sacrament, that he would no longer doze away and trifle away his time; but the spell under which he lay resisted prayer and sacrament. His private notes at this time are made up of self-reproaches. "My indolence," he wrote on Easter Eve in 1764, "has sunk into grosser sluggishness. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year." Easter, 1765, came, and found him still in the same state. "My time," he wrote, "has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. My memory grows confused, and I know not how the days pass over me." Happily for his honour, the charm which held him captive was at length broken by no gentle or friendly hand. He had been weak enough to pay serious attention to a story about a ghost which haunted a house in Cock Lane, and had actually gone himself with some of his friends, at one in the morning, to St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, in the hope of receiving a communication from the perturbed spirit. But the spirit, though adjured with all solemnity, remained obstinately silent; and it soon appeared that a naughty girl of eleven had been amusing herself by making fools of so many philosophers. Churchill, who, confident in his powers, drunk with popularity, and burning with party spirit, was looking for some man of established fame and Tory politics to insult, celebrated the Cock Lane Ghost in three cantos, nicknamed Johnson "Pomposo," asked where the book was which had been so long promised and so liberally paid for, and directly accused the great moralist of cheating. This terrible word proved effectual; and in October, 1765, ap-

peared, after a delay of nine years, the new edition of Shakspeare.

37. This publication saved Johnson's character for honesty, but added nothing to the fame of his abilities and learning. The preface, though it contains some good passages, is not in his best manner. The most valuable notes are those in which he had an opportunity of showing how attentively he had during many years observed human life and human nature. The best specimen is the note on the character of Polonius. Nothing so good is to be found even in Wilhelm Meister's admirable examination of "Hamlet." But here praise must end. It would be difficult to name a more slovenly, a more worthless edition of any great classic. The reader may turn over play after play without finding one happy conjectural emendation, or one ingenious and satisfactory explanation of a passage which had baffled preceding commentators. Johnson had, in his prospectus, told the world that he was peculiarly fitted for the task which he had undertaken, because he had, as a lexicographer, been under the necessity of taking a wider view of the English language than any of his predecessors. That his knowledge of our literature was extensive is indisputable. But, unfortunately, he had altogether neglected that very part of our literature with which it is especially desirable that an editor of Shakspeare should be conversant. It is dangerous to assert a negative. Yet little will be risked by the assertion, that in the two folio volumes of the "English Dictionary" there is not a single passage quoted from any dramatist of the Elizabethan age, except Shakspeare and Ben. Even from Ben the quotations are few. Johnson might easily, in a few months, have made himself well acquainted with every old play that was extant. But it never seems to have occurred to him that this was a necessary preparation for the work which he had undertaken. He would doubt-

less have admitted that it would be the height of absurdity in a man who was not familiar with the works of Æschylus and Euripides to publish an edition of Sophocles. Yet he ventured to publish an edition of Shakspeare, without having ever in his life, as far as can be discovered, read a single scene of Massinger, Ford, Decker, Webster, Marlow, Beaumont, or Fletcher. His detractors were noisy and scurrilous. Those who most loved and honoured him had little to say in praise of the manner in which he had discharged the duty of a commentator. He had, however, acquitted himself of a debt which had long lain heavy on his conscience; and he sank back into the repose from which the sting of satire had roused him. He long continued to live upon the fame which he had already won. He was honoured by the University of Oxford with a Doctor's degree, by the Royal Academy with a professorship, and by the King with an interview, in which his Majesty most graciously expressed a hope that so excellent a writer would not cease to write. In the interval, however, between 1765 and 1775, Johnson published only two or three political tracts, the longest of which he could have produced in forty-eight hours, if he had worked as he worked on the life of Savage and on "Rasselas."

38. But, though his pen was now idle, his tongue was active. The influence exercised by his conversation, directly upon those with whom he lived, and indirectly on the whole literary world, was altogether without a parallel. His colloquial talents were indeed of the highest order. He had strong sense, quick discernment, wit, humour, immense knowledge of literature and of life, and an infinite store of curious anecdotes. As respected style, he spoke far better than he wrote. Every sentence which dropped from his lips was as correct in structure as the most nicely balanced period of the *Rambler*. But in his talk there was no pompous triads, and little more than a

fair proportion of words in *osity* and *ation*. All was simplicity, ease, and vigour. He uttered his short, weighty, and pointed sentences with a power of voice, and a justness and energy of emphasis, of which the effect was rather increased than diminished by the rollings of his huge form, and by the asthmatic gaspings and puffings in which the peals of his eloquence generally ended. Nor did the laziness which made him unwilling to sit down to his desk prevent him from giving instruction or entertainment orally. To discuss questions of taste, of learning, of casuistry, in language so exact and so forcible that it might have been printed without the alteration of a word, was to him no exertion, but a pleasure. He loved, as he said, to fold his legs and have his talk out. He was ready to bestow the overflowings of his full mind on anybody who would start a subject, on a fellow-passenger in a stage coach, or on the person who sate at the same table with him in an eating-house. But his conversation was nowhere so brilliant and striking as when he was surrounded by a few friends, whose abilities and knowledge enabled them, as he once expressed it, to send him back every ball that he threw. Some of these, in 1764, formed themselves into a club, which gradually became a formidable power in the commonwealth of letters. The verdicts pronounced by this conclave on new books were speedily known over all London, and were sufficient to sell off a whole edition in a day, or to condemn the sheets to the service of the trunk-maker and the pastry-cook. Nor shall we think this strange when we consider what great and various talents and acquirements met in the little fraternity. Goldsmith was the representative of poetry and light literature, Reynolds of the arts, Burke of political eloquence and political philosophy. There, too, were Gibbon, the greatest historian, and Jones, the greatest linguist, of the age. Garrick brought to the meetings his

inexhaustible pleasantry, his incomparable mimicry, and his consummate knowledge of stage effect. Among the most constant attendants were two high-born and high-bred gentlemen, closely bound together by friendship, but of widely different characters and habits; Bennet Langton, distinguished by his skill in Greek literature, by the orthodoxy of his opinions, and by the sanctity of his life; and Topham Beauclerk, renowned for his amours, his knowledge of the gay world, his fastidious taste, and his sarcastic wit. To predominate over such a society was not easy. Yet even over such a society Johnson predominated. Burke might indeed have disputed the supremacy to which others were under the necessity of submitting. But Burke, though not generally a very patient listener, was content to take the second part when Johnson was present; and the club itself, consisting of so many eminent men, is to this day popularly designated as Johnson's Club.

39. Among the members of this celebrated body was one to whom it has owed the greater part of its celebrity, yet who was regarded with little respect by his brethren, and had not without difficulty obtained a seat among them. This was James Boswell, a young Scotch lawyer, heir to an honourable name and a fair estate. That he was a coxcomb and a bore, weak, vain, pushing, curious, garrulous, was obvious to all who were acquainted with him. That he could not reason, that he had no wit, no humour, no eloquence, is apparent from his writings. And yet his writings are read beyond the Mississippi, and under the Southern Cross, and are likely to be read as long as the English exists, either as a living or as a dead language. Nature had made him a slave and an idolater. His mind resembled those creepers which the botanists call parasites, and which can subsist only by clinging round the stems and imbibing the juices of stronger plants. He must have

fastened himself on somebody. He might have fastened himself on Wilkes, and have become the fiercest patriot in the Bill of Rights Society. He might have fastened himself on Whitfield, and have become the loudest field preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. In a happy hour he fastened himself on Johnson. The pair might seem ill matched. For Johnson had early been prejudiced against Boswell's country. To a man of Johnson's strong understanding and irritable temper, the silly egotism and adulation of Boswell must have been as teasing as the constant buzz of a fly. Johnson hated to be questioned; and Boswell was eternally catechising him on all kinds of subjects, and sometimes propounded such questions as "What would you do, sir, if you were locked up in a tower with a baby?" Johnson was a water drinker; and Boswell was a wine-bibber, and indeed little better than a habitual sot. It was impossible that there should be perfect harmony between two such companions. Indeed, the great man was sometimes provoked into fits of passion in which he said things which the small man, during a few hours, seriously resented. Every quarrel, however, was soon made up. During twenty years the disciple continued to worship the master: the master continued to scold the disciple, to sneer at him, and to love him. The two friends ordinarily resided at a great distance from each other. Boswell practised in the Parliament House of Edinburgh, and could pay only occasional visits to London. During those visits his chief business was to watch Johnson, to discover all Johnson's habits, to turn the conversation to subjects about which Johnson was likely to say something remarkable, and to fill quarto note books with minutes of what Johnson had said. In this way were gathered the materials out of which was afterwards constructed the most interesting biographical work in the world.

40. Soon after the club began to exist, Johnson formed

a connection less important indeed to his fame, but much more important to his happiness, than his connection with Boswell. Henry Thrale, one of the most opulent brewers in the kingdom, a man of sound and cultivated understanding, rigid principles, and liberal spirit, was married to one of those clever, kind-hearted, engaging, vain, pert young women, who are perpetually doing or saying what is not exactly right, but who, do or say what they may, are always agreeable. In 1765 the Thrales became acquainted with Johnson; and the acquaintance ripened fast into friendship. They were astonished and delighted by the brilliancy of his conversation. They were flattered by finding that a man so widely celebrated, preferred their house to any other in London. Even the peculiarities which seemed to unfit him for civilised society, his gesticulations, his rollings, his puffings, his mutterings, the strange way in which he put on his clothes, the ravenous eagerness with which he devoured his dinner, his fits of melancholy, his fits of anger, his frequent rudeness, his occasional ferocity, increased the interest which his new associates took in him. For these things were the cruel marks left behind by a life which had been one long conflict with disease and with adversity. In a vulgar hack writer such oddities would have excited only disgust. But in a man of genius, learning, and virtue their effect was to add pity to admiration and esteem. Johnson soon had an apartment at the brewery in Southwark, and a still more pleasant apartment at the villa of his friends on Streatham Common. A large part of every year he passed in those abodes, abodes which must have seemed magnificent and luxurious indeed, when compared with the dens in which he had generally been lodged. But his chief pleasures were derived from what the astronomer of his Abyssinian tale called "the endearing elegance of female friendship." Mrs. Thrale rallied him, soothed him, coaxed him, and, if she sometimes

provoked him by her flippancy, made ample amends by listening to his reproofs with angelic sweetness of temper. When he was diseased in body and in mind, she was the most tender of nurses. No comfort that wealth could purchase, no contrivance that womanly ingenuity, set to work by womanly compassion, could devise, was wanting to his sick-room. He requited her kindness by an affection pure as the affection of a father, yet delicately tinged with a gallantry which, though awkward, must have been more flattering than the attentions of a crowd of the fools who gloried in the names, now obsolete, of Buck and Macaroni. It should seem that a full half of Johnson's life, during about sixteen years, was passed under the roof of the Thrales. He accompanied the family sometimes to Bath, and sometimes to Brighton, once to Wales, and once to Paris. But he had at the same time a house in one of the narrow and gloomy courts on the north of Fleet Street. In the garrets was his library, a large and miscellaneous collection of books, falling to pieces and begrimed with dust. On a lower floor he sometimes, but very rarely, regaled a friend with a plain dinner, a veal pie, or a leg of lamb and spinage, and a rice pudding. Nor was the dwelling uninhabited during his long absences. It was the home of the most extraordinary assemblage of inmates that ever was brought together. At the head of the establishment Johnson had placed an old lady named Williams, whose chief recommendations were her blindness and her poverty. But, in spite of her murmurs and reproaches, he gave an asylum to another lady who was as poor as herself, Mrs. Desmoulins, whose family he had known many years before in Staffordshire. Room was found for the daughter of Mrs. Desmoulins, and for another destitute damsel, who was generally addressed as Miss Carmichael, but whom her generous host called Polly. An old quack doctor named Levett, who bled and dosed coal-

heavers and hackney coachmen, and received for fees crusts of bread, bits of bacon, glasses of gin, and sometimes a little copper, completed this strange menagerie. All these poor creatures were at constant war with each other, and with Johnson's negro servant Frank. Sometimes, indeed, they transferred their hostilities from the servant to the master, complained that a better table was not kept for them, and railed or maundered till their benefactor was glad to make his escape to Streatham, or to the Mitre Tavern. And yet he, who was generally the haughtiest and most irritable of mankind, who was but too prompt to resent anything which looked like a slight on the part of a purse-proud bookseller, or of a noble and powerful patron, bore patiently from mendicants, who, but for his bounty, must have gone to the workhouse, insults more provoking than those for which he had knocked down Osborne and bidden defiance to Chesterfield. Year after year Mrs. Desmoulins, Polly, and Levett continued to torment him and to live upon him.

41. The course of life which has been described was interrupted in Johnson's sixty-fourth year by an important event. He had early read an account of the Hebrides, and had been much interested by learning that there was so near him a land peopled by a race which was still as rude and simple as in the middle ages. A wish to become intimately acquainted with a state of society so utterly unlike all that he had ever seen frequently crossed his mind. But it is not probable that his curiosity would have overcome his habitual sluggishness, and his love of the smoke, the mud, and the cries of London, had not Boswell importuned him to attempt the adventure, and offered to be his squire. At length, in August, 1773, Johnson crossed the Highland line, and plunged courageously into what was then considered, by most Englishmen, as a dreary and perilous wilderness. After wandering

about two months through the Celtic region, sometimes in rude boats which did not protect him from the rain, and sometimes on small shaggy ponies which could hardly bear his weight, he returned to his old haunts with a mind full of new images and new theories. During the following year he employed himself in recording his adventures. About the beginning of 1775, his "Journey to the Hebrides" was published, and was, during some weeks, the chief subject of conversation in all circles in which any attention was paid to literature. The book is still read with pleasure. The narrative is entertaining; the speculations, whether sound or unsound, are always ingenious; and the style, though too stiff and pompous, is somewhat easier and more graceful than that of his early writings. His prejudice against the Scotch had at length become little more than matter of jest; and whatever remained of the old feeling had been effectually removed by the kind and respectful hospitality with which he had been received in every part of Scotland. It was, of course, not to be expected that an Oxonian Tory should praise the Presbyterian polity and ritual, or that an eye accustomed to the hedgerows and parks of England should not be struck by the bareness of Berwickshire and East Lothian. But even in censure Johnson's tone is not unfriendly. The most enlightened Scotchmen, with Lord Mansfield at their head, were well pleased. But some foolish and ignorant Scotchmen were moved to anger by a little unpalatable truth which was mingled with much eulogy, and assailed him, whom they chose to consider as the enemy of their country, with libels much more dishonourable to their country than anything that he had ever said or written. They published paragraphs in the newspapers, articles in the magazines, sixpenny pamphlets, five-shilling books. One scribbler abused Johnson for being blear-eyed; another for being a pensioner; a third informed the world

that one of the Doctor's uncles had been convicted of felony in Scotland, and had found that there was in that country one tree capable of supporting the weight of an Englishman. Macpherson, whose "Fingal" had been proved in the "Journey" to be an impudent forgery, threatened to take vengeance with a cane. The only effect of this threat was that Johnson reiterated the charge of forgery in the most contemptuous terms, and walked about, during some time, with a cudgel, which, if the impostor had not been too wise to encounter it, would assuredly have descended upon him, to borrow the sublime language of his own epic poem, "like a hammer on the red son of the furnace."

42. Of other assailants Johnson took no notice whatever. He had early resolved never to be drawn into controversy; and he adhered to his resolution with a steadfastness which is the more extraordinary, because he was, both intellectually and morally, of the stuff of which controversialists are made. In conversation, he was a singularly eager, acute, and pertinacious disputant. When at a loss for good reasons, he had recourse to sophistry; and, when heated by altercation, he made unsparing use of sarcasm and invective. But, when he took his pen in his hand, his whole character seemed to be changed. A hundred bad writers misrepresented him and reviled him; but not one of the hundred could boast of having been thought by him worthy of a refutation, or even of a retort. The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNicols, and Hendersons did their best to annoy him, in the hope that he would give them importance by answering them. But the reader will in vain search his works for any allusion to Kenrick or Campbell, to MacNicol or Henderson. One Scotchman, bent on vindicating the fame of Scotch learning, defied him to the combat in a detestable Latin hexameter.

"Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum."

But Johnson took no notice of the challenge. He had learned, both from his own observation and from literary history, in which he was deeply read, that the place of books in the public estimation is fixed, not by what is written about them, but by what is written in them; and that an author whose works are likely to live is very unwise if he stoops to wrangle with detractors whose works are certain to die. He always maintained that fame was a shuttlecock which could be kept up only by being beaten back, as well as beaten forward, and which would soon fall if there were only one battledore. No saying was oftener in his mouth than that fine apophthegm of Bentley, that no man was ever written down but by himself.

43. Unhappily, a few months after the appearance of the "Journey to the Hebrides," Johnson did what none of his envious assailants could have done, and to a certain extent succeeded in writing himself down. The disputes between England and her American colonies had reached a point at which no amicable adjustment was possible. Civil war was evidently impending; and the ministers seem to have thought that the eloquence of Johnson might with advantage be employed to inflame the nation against the opposition here, and against the rebels beyond the Atlantic. He had already written two or three tracts in defence of the foreign and domestic policy of the government; and those tracts, though hardly worthy of him, were much superior to the crowd of pamphlets which lay on the counters of Almon and Stockdale. But his "Taxation no Tyranny" was a pitiable failure. The very title was a silly phrase, which can have been recommended to his choice by nothing but a jingling alliteration which he ought to have despised. The arguments were such as boys use in debating societies. The pleasantry was as awkward as the gambols of a hippopotamus. Even Boswell was forced to own that, in this unfortunate piece, he could de-

tect no trace of his master's powers. The general opinion was that the strong faculties which had produced the "Dictionary" and the *Rambler* were beginning to feel the effect of time and of disease, and that the old man would best consult his credit by writing no more.

44. But this was a great mistake. Johnson had failed, not because his mind was less vigorous than when he wrote "Rasselas" in the evenings of a week, but because he had foolishly chosen, or suffered others to choose for him, a subject such as he would at no time have been competent to treat. He was in no sense a statesman. He never willingly read or thought or talked about affairs of state. He loved biography, literary history, the history of manners; but political history was positively distasteful to him. The question at issue between the colonies and the mother country was a question about which he had really nothing to say. He failed, therefore, as the greatest men must fail when they attempt to do that for which they are unfit; as Burke would have failed if Burke had tried to write comedies like those of Sheridan; as Reynolds would have failed if Reynolds had tried to paint landscapes like those of Wilson. Happily, Johnson soon had an opportunity of proving most signally that his failure was not to be ascribed to intellectual decay.

45. On Easter Eve, 1777, some persons, deputed by a meeting which consisted of forty of the first booksellers in London, called upon him. Though he had some scruples about doing business at that season, he received his visitors with much civility. They came to inform him that a new edition of the English poets, from Cowley downwards, was in contemplation, and to ask him to furnish short biographical prefaces. He readily undertook the task, a task for which he was pre-eminently qualified. His knowledge of the literary history of England since the Restoration was unrivalled. That knowledge he had de-

rived partly from books, and partly from sources which had long been closed; from old Grub Street traditions; from the talk of forgotten poetasters and pamphleteers who had long been lying in parish vaults; from the recollections of such men as Gilbert Walmesley, who had conversed with the wits of Button; Cibber, who had mutilated the plays of two generations of dramatists; Orrery, who had been admitted to the society of Swift; and Savage, who had rendered services of no very honourable kind to Pope. The biographer therefore sate down to his task with a mind full of matter. He had at first intended to give only a paragraph to every minor poet, and only four or five pages to the greatest name. But the flood of anecdote and criticism overflowed the narrow channel. The work, which was originally meant to consist only of a few sheets, swelled into ten volumes, small volumes, it is true, and not closely printed. The first four appeared in 1779, the remaining six in 1781.

46. The "Lives of the Poets" are, on the whole, the best of Johnson's works. The narratives are as entertaining as any novel. The remarks on life and on human nature are eminently shrewd and profound. The criticisms are often excellent, and, even when grossly and provokingly unjust, well deserve to be studied. For, however erroneous they may be, they are never silly. They are the judgments of a mind trammelled by prejudice and deficient in sensibility, but vigorous and acute. They therefore generally contain a portion of valuable truth which deserves to be separated from the alloy; and, at the very worst, they mean something, a praise to which much of what is called criticism in our time has no pretensions.

47. Savage's "Life" Johnson reprinted nearly as it had appeared in 1744. Whoever, after reading that life, will turn to the other lives will be struck by the difference of style. Since Johnson had been at ease in his circum-

stances he had written little and had talked much. When, therefore, he, after the lapse of years, resumed his pen, the mannerism which he had contracted while he was in the constant habit of elaborate composition was less perceptible than formerly; and his diction frequently had a colloquial ease which it had formerly wanted. The improvement may be discerned by a skilful critic in the "Journey to the Hebrides," and in the "Lives of the Poets" is so obvious that it cannot escape the notice of the most careless reader.

48. Among the lives the best are perhaps those of Cowley, Dryden, and Pope. The very worst is, beyond all doubt, that of Gray.

49. This great work at once became popular. There was, indeed, much just and much unjust censure: but even those who were loudest in blame were attracted by the book in spite of themselves. Malone computed the gains of the publishers at five or six thousand pounds. But the writer was very poorly remunerated. Intending at first to write very short prefaces, he had stipulated for only two hundred guineas. The booksellers, when they saw how far his performance had surpassed his promise, added only another hundred. Indeed, Johnson, though he did not despise, or affect to despise, money, and though his strong sense and long experience ought to have qualified him to protect his own interests, seems to have been singularly unskilful and unlucky in his literary bargains. He was generally reputed the first English writer of his time. Yet several writers of his time sold their copyrights for sums such as he never ventured to ask. To give a single instance, Robertson received four thousand five hundred pounds for the "History of Charles V."; and it is no disrespect to the memory of Robertson to say that the "History of Charles V." is both a less valuable and a less amusing book than the "Lives of the Poets."

50. Johnson was now in his seventy-second year The infirmities of age were coming fast upon him. That inevitable event of which he never thought without horror was brought near to him; and his whole life was darkened by the shadow of death. He had often to pay the cruel price of longevity. Every year he lost what could never be replaced. The strange dependents to whom he had given shelter, and to whom, in spite of their faults, he was strongly attached by habit, dropped off one by one; and, in the silence of his home, he regretted even the noise of their scolding matches. The kind and generous Thrale was no more; and it would have been well if his wife had been laid beside him. But she survived to be the laughing-stock of those who had envied her, and to draw from the eyes of the old man who had loved her beyond anything in the world tears far more bitter than he would have shed over her grave. With some estimable and many agreeable qualities, she was not made to be independent. The control of a mind more steadfast than her own was necessary to her respectability. While she was restrained by her husband, a man of sense and firmness, indulgent to her taste in trifles, but always the undisputed master of his house, her worst offences had been impertinent jokes, white lies, and short fits of pettishness ending in sunny good humour. But he was gone; and she was left an opulent widow of forty, with strong sensibility, volatile fancy, and slender judgment. She soon fell in love with a music-master from Brescia, in whom nobody but herself could discover anything to admire. Her pride, and perhaps some better feelings, struggled hard against this degrading passion. But the struggle irritated her nerves, soured her temper, and at length endangered her health. Conscious that her choice was one which Johnson could not approve, she became desirous to escape from his inspection. Her manner towards him changed. She was

sometimes cold and sometimes petulant. She did not conceal her joy when he left Streatham; she never pressed him to return; and, if he came unbidden, she received him in a manner which convinced him that he was no longer a welcome guest. He took the very intelligible hints which she gave. He read, for the last time, a chapter of the Greek Testament in the library which had been formed by himself. In a solemn and tender prayer he commended the house and its inmates to the Divine protection, and, with emotions which choked his voice and convulsed his powerful frame, left for ever that beloved home for the gloomy and desolate house behind Fleet Street, where the few and evil days which still remained to him were to run out. Here, in June, 1783, he had a paralytic stroke, from which, however, he recovered, and which does not appear to have at all impaired his intellectual faculties. But other maladies came thick upon him. His asthma tormented him day and night. Dropsical symptoms made their appearance. While sinking under a complication of diseases, he heard that the woman whose friendship had been the chief happiness of sixteen years of his life had married an Italian fiddler; that all London was crying shame upon her; and that the newspapers and magazines were filled with allusions to the Ephesian matron, and the two pictures in "Hamlet." He vehemently said that he would try to forget her existence. He never uttered her name. Every memorial of her which met his eye he flung into the fire. She meanwhile fled from the laughter and the hisses of her countrymen and countrywomen to a land where she was unknown, hastened across Mount Cenis, and learned, while passing a merry Christmas of concerts and lemonade parties at Milan, that the great man with whose name hers is inseparably associated had ceased to exist.

51. He had, in spite of much mental and much bodily

affliction, clung vehemently to life. The feeling described in that fine but gloomy paper which closes the series of his *Idlers* seemed to grow stronger in him as his last hour drew near. He fancied that he should be able to draw his breath more easily in a southern climate, and would probably have set out for Rome and Naples, but for his fear of the expense of the journey. That expense, indeed, he had the means of defraying; for he had laid up about two thousand pounds, the fruit of labours which had made the fortune of several publishers. But he was unwilling to break in upon this hoard; and he seems to have wished even to keep its existence a secret. Some of his friends hoped that the government might be induced to increase his pension to six hundred pounds a year; but this hope was disappointed; and he resolved to stand one English winter more. That winter was his last. His legs grew weaker; his breath grew shorter; the fatal water gathered fast, in spite of incisions which he, courageous against pain, but timid against death, urged his surgeons to make deeper and deeper. Though the tender care which had mitigated his sufferings during months of sickness at Streatham was withdrawn, he was not left desolate. The ablest physicians and surgeons attended him, and refused to accept fees from him. Burke parted from him with deep emotion. Windham sate much in the sick-room, arranged the pillows, and sent his own servant to watch a night by the bed. Frances Burney, whom the old man had cherished with fatherly kindness, stood weeping at the door; while Langton, whose piety eminently qualified him to be an adviser and comforter at such a time, received the last pressure of his friend's hand within. When at length the moment, dreaded through so many years, came close, the dark cloud passed away from Johnson's mind. His temper became unusually patient and gentle; he ceased to think with terror of death, and of that which lies beyond

death; and he spoke much of the mercy of God, and of the propitiation of Christ. In this serene frame of mind he died on the 13th of December, 1784. He was laid, a week later, in Westminster Abbey, among the eminent men of whom he had been the historian,—Cowley and Denham, Dryden and Congreve, Gay, Prior, and Addison.

52. Since his death the popularity of his works—the "Lives of the Poets," and, perhaps, the "Vanity of Human Wishes," excepted—has greatly diminished. His "Dictionary" has been altered by editors till it can scarcely be called his. An allusion to his *Rambler* or his *Idler* is not readily apprehended in literary circles. The fame even of "Rasselas" has grown somewhat dim. But, though the celebrity of the writings may have declined, the celebrity of the writer, strange to say, is as great as ever. Boswell's book has done for him more than the best of his own books could do. The memory of other authors is kept alive by their works. But the memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive. The old philosopher is still among us in the brown coat with the metal buttons and the shirt which ought to be at wash, blinking, puffing, rolling his head, drumming with his fingers, tearing his meat like a tiger, and swallowing his tea in oceans. No human being who has been more than seventy years in the grave is so well known to us. And it is but just to say that our intimate acquaintance with what he would himself have called the anfractuosities of his intellect and of his temper serves only to strengthen our conviction that he was both a great and a good man.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Life of Samuel Johnson.

1 1. *Eminent English writers of the eighteenth century.* See Chronological Table.

1 4. *Lichfield.* A clear idea of geographical relations is indispensable to an intelligent grasp of literary history ; the student, therefore, should keep a map near him, and fix in mind the location of the places associated with important persons and events.

1 11. *Churchman.* A member of the Established Church of England as distinguished from Nonconformists or Dissenters, *i.e.*, the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Baptists, etc. For the struggle between religious parties in England, which is a long story, beginning in the reign of Henry VIII., at the time of the Reformation in Germany, see histories of England.

1 13. *The sovereigns in possession* were, first, William and Mary, who ascended the throne at the Revolution of 1688, which dethroned James II. ; and, afterwards, Anne, who succeeded William and Mary in 1702. Some acquaintance with the political history of this period, which may be gained from any history of England, is necessary to a full understanding of the life of Johnson.

1 14. *Jacobite.* From "Jacobus," the Latin form of "James." An adherent of James II. after he was deposed, or of his son James Edward, the "Old Pretender" ; or of his grandson Charles Edward, the "Young Pretender" ; hence, an opposer of the Revolution of 1688.

1 15. A picture of Johnson's birthplace may be seen in G. Birkbeck Hill's edition of *Boswell's Johnson.*

1 26. *The royal touch.* It is a very old superstition that

scrofula can be cured by a touch of the sovereign's hand; hence, the disease is popularly called "the king's evil." See *Macbeth*, IV., iii., and Addison's account of Sir Roger de Coverley's visit to Westminster Abbey (Lowell's edition, in this series, p. 146). Queen Anne was the last English sovereign to touch for "the evil." For more information on the subject, see Chambers's *Book of Days*, vol. i., pp. 82–85.

2 5. *Her hand was applied in vain.* Perhaps the father accounted for the failure, as did many Jacobites on similar occasions, by the reflection that Mary, William, and Anne were "usurpers," and therefore could not be expected to have inherited a power which came only with "divine right"!

2 11. A picture of the Grammar School at Lichfield, which was attended by Johnson, Garrick, and Addison, is shown in Hill's edition of *Boswell's Johnson*.

2 22. *Attic.* Attica was the district of Greece in which Athens was the principal city.

2 26. *Augustan delicacy of taste.* The reign of Augustus Cæsar (B.C. 27–A.D. 14) was the golden age of Roman literature and art.

2 27. *The great public schools of England* are Winchester, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Westminster, Charterhouse, Shrewsbury, St. Paul's, and Merchant Taylors', which are supported, not by taxation, like the free "public schools" of America, but by endowments and the tuition of pay scholars.

2 31. *The great restorers of learning.* During the "Dark Ages" (A.D. 600–1200), the civilization which Rome had spread over Europe decayed, and European society fell back into a state of semi-barbarism. The term "Revival of Learning" is usually applied to the special outburst of enthusiasm for Greek and Latin literature and art which originated with Italian scholars in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and which is more properly called the "Renaissance." Foremost among the restorers of learning were Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Politian (Italy), Erasmus (Holland), Casaubon (France), and Sir Thomas More (England).

2 33. *Petrarch.* The greatest lyric poet of Italy (1304–1374), and an ardent scholar. He wrote both in Latin and in Italian, himself prizing most his Latin works; but he is now more

famous for his beautiful Italian lyrics. See Byron's *Childe Harold*, canto iv., stanzas 30–34 (lines 262–306).

3 10. England has five universities: two ancient, Oxford and Cambridge ; and three modern, London (1836), Durham (1837), and the Victoria University (1880).

3 13. *Pembroke College.* One of the twenty colleges that compose the University of Oxford. For an account of the English universities see the encyclopædias under "University," "Oxford," and "Cambridge."

3 20. *Macrobius.* An obscure Latin author (*circa* 400 A.D.).

3 27. *Christ Church.* One of the most fashionable of the Oxford colleges.

3 32. *Gentleman commoner.* One who pays for his commons, *i.e.*, a student who is not dependent on any foundation for support, but pays all the university charges ; corresponding, in some American schools, to a "pay scholar" as distinguished from one on a scholarship.

4 8. *Pope's "Messiah."* Pope's place in English literature is so important that the details of his life and work should be looked up in the encyclopædias or the histories of English literature. A good short biography will be found in the English Men of Letters Series. No poet except Shakespeare is oftener quoted. The *Messiah* was originally contributed to the *Spectator*.

6 11. *Usher of a grammar school in Leicestershire.* In Great Britain, "grammar schools" are those in which Latin and Greek are taught as the principal subjects of instruction. In their curricula they do not differ from the "public" schools. See note to **2** 27. "Usher" means, of course, an "assistant master."

6 19. *Politian* (1454–1494). The friend of Lorenzo de' Medici (the great patron of Italian learning), and one of the leaders of the Italian Renaissance. See note to **2** 31.

6 24. *Mrs. Elizabeth Porter* was twenty years older than Johnson.

6 29. *The Queensberrys and Lepels.* English families of high rank.

6 33. *Titty.* A nickname for "Elizabeth."

7 22. *David Garrick.* One of the greatest of English actors, equally at home in tragedy and comedy. Garrick was so promi-

nent in the life and literature of the eighteenth century that the details of his career should be looked up in an encyclopædia. See also Goldsmith's poem *Retaliation*, which contains a sketch of Garrick's character.

7 33. *In the preceding generation.* Addison, for example.

8 5. *Several writers of the nineteenth century*, etc. For instance, Byron, Scott, George Eliot, and Macaulay himself. See Introduction.

8 12. See note to 4 8.

8 17. *Thomson.* James Thomson, an English poet (1700–1748), whose fame rests on his *Seasons*, *The Castle of Indolence*, and *Rule Britannia*, which are worth the student's attention.

8 18. *Fielding.* Henry Fielding (1707–1754), the first great English novelist. His important novels were *Joseph Andrews*, *Jonathan Wild*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia.* A charming short sketch of Fielding's life is to be found in Thackeray's *English Humorists.*

8 20. *The Beggar's Opera*, by John Gay, had a run of sixty-three nights, and by its success banished from the stage for a time the Italian opera, which it ridiculed.

8 29. *A porter's knot.* A pad for supporting burdens on the head.

9 9. *Drury Lane.* A street in the heart of London, running north and south about midway between Charing Cross and St. Paul's Cathedral. In the time of the Stuarts it was an aristocratic part of the city, but about Johnson's time its respectability began to wane.

9 21. *Alamode beefshops.* "Alamode beef" was "scraps and remainders of beef boiled down into a thick soup or stew."—*Murray's Dictionary.*

10 1. *Osborne.* "It has been confidently related, with many embellishments, that Johnson one day knocked Osborne down in his shop, with a folio, and put his foot upon his neck. The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. 'Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him. But it was not in his shop : it was in my own chamber.' "—Boswell.

"There is nothing to tell, dearest lady, but that he was insolent and I beat him, and that he was a blockhead and told of it,

which I should never have done. . . . I have beat many a fellow, but the rest had the wit to hold their tongues."—Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Johnson.*

10 4. *The Harleian Library.* The famous library collected by Robert Harley, First Earl of Oxford (1661–1724), and afterwards bought by Osborne. The books were described in a printed catalogue of four volumes, part of which was made by Johnson.

10 13. *It was not then safe,* etc. For the reason see Macaulay's *History of England,* chapter iii., the paragraph beginning, "No part of the load which the old mails carried out was more important than the newsletters." For a discussion of the relation of the Publicity of Parliaments to Liberty see Lieber's *Civil Liberty and Self-Government,* chapter xiii.

10 17. *Lilliput.* The land of the pygmies described in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels,* a book which every boy should read. The names Blefuscu, Mildendo, etc., occur in that celebrated classic.

10 29. *Capulets* and *Montagues.* The English spelling of the names of the Cappelletti and Montecchi, two noble families of Northern Italy, chiefly memorable for the legend on which Shakespeare has founded his play of *Romeo and Juliet.*

10 30. *The Blues of the Roman Circus against the Greens.* In Roman chariot races the drivers were at first distinguished by white and red liveries. Afterwards two additional colors, a light green and a cerulean blue, were introduced. In course of time the Romans, like modern "sporting-men," devoted their lives and fortunes to the color which they espoused; and thus were formed certain "factions of the circus," which often came to blows in their rivalry. For a fuller account of this subject see Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* chapter xl.

10 32. *The Church.* The Established Church of England.

10 35. *Sacheverell.* A high church divine (1672–1724) who maintained the doctrine of non-resistance to the king. For an account of his prosecution by the Whigs see histories of England.

11 6. *Jacobitical.* See note to **1** 14.

11 9. *Tom Tempest.* A character in Johnson's *Idler* (No. 10).

11 11. *Laud* (1573–1645), Archbishop of Canterbury, and principal adviser of Charles I. in all matters relating to the Church. He was of the opinion that "unity cannot long continue in the Church when uniformity is shut out of the Church door;" and

when he came into ecclesiastical power he attempted to enforce uniformity of worship by tyrannical measures. Laud soon became profoundly hated by the Parliamentarians, and was finally beheaded by order of Parliament, in spite of the intercession of the king. For an account of his character and work see Gardiner's *Student's History of England*, or the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. See also Macaulay's *Essay on Hallam*.

11 15. *Hampden.* A statesman of the time of Charles I., famous for his resistance to the demands of the king for "ship-money." His life and work should be looked up in detail.

11 17. *Falkland and Clarendon.* Statesmen of the time of Charles I., and adherents of the king.

11 18. *Roundheads.* The adherents of Parliament in the struggle against Charles I., so called in ridicule, from their fashion of wearing their hair closely cut. The Cavaliers, their opponents, wore their hair in long ringlets.

11 35. *The Great Rebellion.* The rebellion against Charles I. The explanation of Johnson's prejudice against the Scotch is not so simple as Macaulay suggests. The passage in Boswell's *Johnson*, which Macaulay probably had in mind, is as follows :

"After musing for some time, he [Johnson] said: 'I wonder how I should have any enemies, for I do harm to nobody.' BOSWELL: 'In the first place, Sir, you will be pleased to recollect that you set out with attacking the Scotch; so you got a whole nation for your enemies.' JOHNSON: 'Why, I own that by my definition of *oats* I meant to vex them.' BOSWELL: 'Pray, Sir, can you trace the cause of your antipathy to the Scotch?' JOHNSON: 'I cannot, Sir.' BOSWELL: 'Old Mr. Sheridan says it was because they sold Charles the First.' JOHNSON: 'Then, Sir, old Mr. Sheridan has found out a very good reason!'" The definition of *oats* referred to was: "A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people."

12 9. *The opposition.* The party in Parliament opposed to the Ministry.

12 14. *That noble poem in which Juvenal had described*, etc. The *Third Satire*, in which Juvenal (A.D. 38–120) tells why his friend left Rome to dwell on the sea-coast. Juvenal is known to us only through his sixteen *Satires*, which occupy the very first rank in satirical literature, and are of priceless value as pictures

of Roman life in his day. Dryden's versions of five of the satires are admirable, and should be looked up. A good metrical translation is Gifford's. Pope's imitations of Horace's *Satires* and *Epistles* may be found in any large library. Johnson's *London*, imitating Juvenal's *Third Satire*, is in Hales's *Longer English Poems*.

13 14. *Pledged.* Pawned.

13 29. *The blue ribands in Saint James's Square.* The ribbons worn by members of the Order of the Garter. St. James's Square contains the mansions of the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Derby, the Bishop of London, and other members of the aristocracy.

13 22. *Psalmanazar*, a French adventurer, won fame and money by pretending to be a native of Formosa.

13 31. *Newgate.* Once the principal prison of London. Among famous prisoners confined there were Daniel Defoe, Jack Sheppard, and Titus Oates.

14 7. *The Piazza of Covent Garden.* Originally the "Convent Garden" of the monks of Westminster. In the Covent Garden Piazzas, now nearly all cleared away, the families of many distinguished persons used to reside.

14 26. *Grub Street.* "The name of a street in London much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called Grub Street." —*Johnson's Dictionary.*

15 5. *Warburton.* William Warburton (1698–1779), Bishop of Gloucester, a celebrated critic and controversialist. For Johnson's estimate of him see Johnson's *Life of Pope.*

15 15. *Chesterfield.* Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son* is still considered a classic. Johnson said of it, "Take out the immorality, and it should be put into the hands of every young gentleman."

16 5. *The "Vanity of Humañ Wishes"* is in both Hales's *Longer English Poems* and Syle's *From Milton to Tennyson.* The passages referred to by Macaulay should be looked up and compared with the passages from Juvenal's *Tenth Satire.* See note on **12** 14.

16 29. *His tragedy, begun many years before.* This was *Irene* (see p. 7), the plot of which concerns the unhappy love of Mahomet the Great, first emperor of the Turks, for a beautiful Greek captive named Irene.

16 32. *Goodman's Fields.* Not far from the Tower of London.

16 35. *Drury Lane Theatre.* One of the oldest and most important of the London theatres, first opened in 1674, with an address by Dryden ; several times rebuilt. Here Garrick, Kean, the Kembles, and Mrs. Siddons used to act. For *Drury Lane* see note to **9** 9.

17 30. *He had not the slightest notion of what blank verse should be.* For a discussion of what blank verse should and should not be, see Lanier's *The Science of English Verse* (Scribner's), Carson's *Primer of English Verse* (Ginn and Co.), or Gummere's *Handbook of Poetics* (Ginn and Co.).

18 6, 7. *The Tatler. The Spectator.* The former was a periodical established by Richard Steele in 1709, and was the forerunner of English literary magazines. It ran successfully for nearly two years. Two months after the last number of the *Tatler*, the *Spectator* appeared, published every week day, and supported chiefly by the contributions of Addison, assisted by Steele. The *Spectator* ran with great success until 1713, when it was succeeded by the *Guardian*, the last periodical on which Addison and Steele worked together. The student who is not familiar with the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* should make their acquaintance at once. For an interesting account of the *Spectator and the Tatler*, see the Introduction in Dr. Lowell's edition of the *Sir Roger de Coverley* papers in this series. For a fuller account of these famous periodicals, see Macaulay's *Essay on Addison*, or Courthope's *Life of Addison* in the English Men of Letters Series.

18 21. *Richardson.* Samuel Richardson (1689–1761), the famous English novelist who wrote *Pamela*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*.

18 23. *Young.* Edward Young (1681–1765), an English poet, best known for his *Night Thoughts*.

Hartley. David Hartley (1705–1757), a physician and psychologist, a friend of Warburton, Young, and Bishop Butler.

18 24. *Bubb Doddington.* "Indeed, as far as we recollect, there were in the whole House of Commons only two men of distinguished abilities who were not connected with the government ; and those two men stood so low in public estimation, that the only service which they could have rendered to any government would have been to oppose it. We speak of Lord

George Sackville and Bubb Doddington."—Macaulay's *Essay on the Earl of Chatham.*

18 29. *Prince Frederic.* The oldest son of George II. and father of George III.

18 31. *Leicester House.* Once the home of the Sidneys ; in the time of Johnson, the residence of the Prince of Wales.

19 24–28. *Sir Roger*, *Will Wimble*, *Will Honeycomb*, etc. Characters or sketches in the *Spectator.* See, for instance, the charming Nos. 5, 69, 106, 108, 159, and 584. All the papers relating to Sir Roger and his club have been edited by Dr. Lowell for this series.

19 30–33. *Squire Bluster*, *Mrs. Busy*, etc. Characters or sketches in the *Rambler.*

20 9. *The Gunnings.* Two sisters, Elizabeth and Maria, celebrated and fashionable beauties of the middle of the eighteenth century. Frequent mention of them is made by Horace Walpole in his correspondence.

20 10. *Lady Mary.* Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762), whose beauty and wit were famous throughout England. When her husband was appointed ambassador to Constantinople, she accompanied him, and wrote from the East her *Letters*, one of the most delightful books in our language. She introduced into Europe the practice of inoculation, which she had seen in Turkey.

20 12. *The Monthly Review.* Whig in politics and non-conformist in theology ; therefore unfriendly to Johnson, who was a Tory and a Churchman. Its opponent and rival was the *Critical Review*, which was supported by Smollett. Johnson, and Robertson.

21 8. This famous *letter* is as follows :

To the Right Honorable the Earl of Chesterfield.

February 7, 1755.

My Lord,

I have been lately informed by the proprietor of the *World* that two papers in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honor which, being very little accustomed to favors from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your

Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address ; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*— that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending ; but I found my attendance so little encouraged that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I have done all that I could ; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now passed, since I waited in your outward rooms or was repulsed from your door ; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help ? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind ; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it ; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it ; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favorer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less ; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

21 15. *Horne Tooke.* John Horne, an eminent English politician and philologist, whose conversational powers rivalled those of Johnson. See Boswell's *Johnson*, 1778. The passage in the *Preface*, which moved Horne so deeply, is often quoted as a specimen of Johnson's best style, and is as follows :

"In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed ; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceeded the

faults of that which it condemns ; yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great ; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed. If the lexicons of ancient tongues, now immutably fixed, and comprised in a few volumes, be yet, after the toil of successive ages, inadequate and delusive ; if the aggregated knowledge, and co-operating diligence of the Italian academicians, did not secure them from the censure of Beni ; if the embodied critics of France, when fifty years had been spent upon their work, were obliged to change its economy, and give their second edition another form, I may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which, if I could obtain, in this gloom of solitude, what could it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds : I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise."

21 30. *Teutonic language.* The Teutonic languages are those spoken by the Teutonic or German races, *i.e.*, German, Dutch, English, Danish, Swedish, etc., as distinguished from the Romance or Latin languages, *i.e.*, Italian, Spanish, French, etc. Much light is thrown on the origin and meaning of English words by a knowledge of kindred words in the other languages of the Teutonic group.

21 32. *Was scarcely a Teutonic language.* An exaggerated reference to Johnson's fondness for words of Latin origin. In the *Preface to the Dictionary*, seventy-two per cent. of the words are of old English, *i.e.*, Teutonic origin, and only twenty-eight per cent. of Latin or Greek origin.

21 33. *Junius and Skinner.* Francis Junius (1589–1678) and Stephen Skinner (1623–1667), were scholars who devoted themselves to the study of the Teutonic languages. How lightly Johnson took his etymological labors may be gathered from the following anecdote :

"Dr. Adams found him [Johnson] one day busy at his 'Dictionary,' when the following dialogue ensued :

"Adams. This is a great work, Sir. How are you to get all the etymologies ?

"JOHNSON. Why, Sir, here is a shelf with Junius, and Skinner, and others; and there is a Welch gentleman who has published a collection of Welch proverbs, who will help me with the Welch.

"ADAMS. But, Sir, how can you do this in three years?

"JOHNSON. Sir, I have no doubt that I can do it in three years.

"ADAMS. But the French Academy, which consists of forty members, took forty years to compile their dictionary.

"JOHNSON. Sir, thus it is. This is the proportion. Let me see; forty times forty is sixteen hundred. As three to sixteen hundred, so is the proportion of an Englishman to a Frenchman."—Boswell's *Life*, 1747.

22 5. *Spunging-houses* were victualling houses or taverns, frequently belonging to bailiffs, where persons arrested for debt were kept by a bailiff for twenty-four hours before being lodged in prison, in order that their friends might have an opportunity of settling the debt. The following is the half-jocose definition of Johnson's *Dictionary:* "Spunging-house, a house to which debtors are taken before commitment to prison, where the bailiffs *sponge* upon them, or riot at their cost."

22 19. *Jenyns.* Soame Jenyns (1704–1787). Johnson justly condemned his *Inquiry* as a slight and shallow attempt to solve one of the most difficult of moral problems.

23 4. *Rasselas. The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.* Published in 1759. Frequently reprinted in English, and translated into many foreign languages. See Bibliography.

23 6. *Miss Lydia Languish.* A character in Sheridan's famous comedy, *The Rivals.* Her peculiarities may be inferred from her name.

24 4. *Bruce's Travels.* James Bruce (1730–1804) was the most celebrated of the early African explorers.

24 8. *Burke.* Edmund Burke (1729–1797), orator and statesman, distinguished above all the men of his times for eloquence and political foresight, and without doubt one of the most cultivated men of the eighteenth century. See Professor Cook's edition of Burke's *Speech on Conciliation with America*, in the present series.

24 9. *Mrs. Lennox.* A literary woman of Johnson's time. She was a great favorite with Johnson, who cited her in his *Dictionary*, and gave a supper in her honor to celebrate the pub-

lication of her first book. Much interesting information about her is given in Boswell's *Johnson*. *Mrs. Sheridan.* The mother of the dramatist Richard Brinsley Sheridan. See note on **23** 6. She was something of an author, and "a most agreeable companion to an intellectual man." Johnson spent many pleasant hours at her home.

24 22. *The poet who made Hector quote Aristotle*, etc. Shakespeare. See *Troilus and Cressida*, Act II., Sc. ii., and *Winter's Tale*, Act II., Sc. i., and Act V., Sc. ii. *Aristotle*, the great Greek philosopher, lived in the fourth century B.C., eight hundred years after the Trojan War. *Hector*, the great hero of Troy.

24 23. *Julio Romano* was an Italian painter (1492–1546), the most gifted of Raphael's pupils.

25 3. *The Lord Privy Seal.* The Privy Seal is appended to British documents of minor importance which do not require the Great Seal. The officer who has the custody of the seal is now called the Lord Privy Seal. He is the fifth great officer of state, and has generally a seat in the Cabinet. The Lord Privy Seal referred to in the text was Lord Gower. Johnson once said to Boswell: "You know, Sir, Lord Gower forsook the old Jacobite interest. When I came to the word *Renegado*, after telling that it meant 'one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter,' I added, *sometimes we say a Gower*. Thus it went to the press; but the printer had more wit than I, and struck it out."—Boswell's *Johnson*, 1755.

25 13. *Oxford was becoming loyal.* See **11** 5, 6. George III., of course, belonged, not to the House of Stuart, but to the House of Hanover.

25 14, 15. To be explained by lines 10–12.

25 16. *Lord Bute.* For a full account of Bute, see Macaulay's *Essay on the Earl of Chatham.*

25 29. *The printer's devil.* The youngest apprentice in a printing office, who runs on errands and does dirty work, such as washing ink from rollers and type, sweeping, etc. By "fearing" him, Macaulay means dreading the call for more copy which the "devil" would bring him.

26 20. *A ghost which haunted a house in Cock Lane.* For a full account of "Scratching Fanny, the Cock Lane Ghost," and the investigation of the matter by Johnson, see Hill's edition of

Boswell's *Johnson*, 1763; Hare's *Walks in London*, vol. i., pp. 204 ff.; Mr. Lang's book, *The Cock Lane Ghost*, or the interesting article in *Harper's Magazine* (August, 1893). Macaulay's account of the affair is unjust to Johnson.

26 28. *Churchill.* An English poet and satirist (1731–1764), now remembered as much for his profligacy as for his poetry. Some of his lines on the Cock Lane Ghost are reprinted in Hare's *Walks in London*.

27 10. *Polonius.* See Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

27 11. *Wilhelm Meister.* The hero of a famous novel of the same name, by Goethe. The remarks on the character of Hamlet, which Macaulay refers to, are quoted in the Introduction to Mr. Rolfe's edition of *Hamlet* (Harper).

27 30. *Ben.* Ben Jonson (1574–1637), next to his friend Shakespeare, the greatest dramatist of the Elizabethan age.

28 2, 3. *Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles.* The three great tragic poets of Greece. Of their two hundred and fifty-eight dramas, only thirty-two have come down to us. The chief works of Æschylus (525–456 B.C.) are *Prometheus Bound* and *Agamennon;* of Sophocles (495–405 B.C.), *Œdipus Tyrannus, Œdipus Coloneus,* and *Antigone;* of Euripides (485–406 B.C.), *Alcestis, Electra, Iphigenia in Tauris, Orestes, Bacchæ,* and *Iphigenia in Aulis.*

28 5, 6. *Massinger, Ford, Decker, Webster, Marlow, Beaumont, or Fletcher.* Dramatists of the Elizabethan Age, contemporary with Shakespeare.

28 16. *The Royal Academy.* The oldest and most influential institution in London connected with the Fine Arts, founded in 1768. Johnson was appointed "Professor in Ancient Literature" the year after it was founded, and about the same time Goldsmith was elected "Professor in Ancient History." Of this appointment, Goldsmith, writing to his brother in January, 1770, said: "The King has lately been pleased to make me Professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed, and I took it rather as a compliment to the institution than any benefit to myself. Honors to one in my situation are something like ruffles to one that wants a shirt."

29 31. *Goldsmith.* Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774), the author of the finest poem (*The Deserted Village*), the most exquisite novel

(*The Vicar of Wakefield*), and the most delightful comedy (*She Stoops to Conquer*) of the period to which he belongs. For an excellent short account of him, see the Introduction to Miss Jordan's edition of *The Vicar of Wakefield* in this series, or Macaulay's *Life* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

29 32. *Reynolds.* Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792), the first president of the Royal Academy, and generally acknowledged as the head of the English school of painting in the eighteenth century. He wrote much on art, and contributed, at Johnson's request, three papers to the *Idler*.

29 34. *Gibbon.* Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), author of the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, probably the greatest historical work ever written in English. *Jones.* Sir William Jones (1746–1794), a great Oriental scholar, the founder and first president of the Royal Asiatic Society "for investigating the history, antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia."

31 2. *Wilkes.* John Wilkes (1727–1797), a man of bad character, prominent in the politics of his day, and notorious chiefly for prosecutions brought against him that involved the liberty of the press. A full account of him will be found in Macaulay's *Essay on the Earl of Chatham*, or in Gardiner's *Student's History of England*.

31 4. *Whitfield.* George Whitfield (1714–1770), one of the founders of Methodism, celebrated for the power of his preaching, which was usually done in the open air. He made seven missionary journeys to America. Some interesting information about him is given in Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*.

32 27. *Southwark.* On the south side of the Thames. *Streatham Common*, in South London.

33 11. *Buck.* Dandy. *Maccaroni.* "The word is derived from the Macaroni club, instituted by a set of flashy men who had travelled in Italy, and introduced Italian macaroni at Almack's subscription table."—Brewer's *Handbook of Phrase and Fable. Cf.* the familiar phrase in "Yankee Doodle."

34 10. *The Mitre Tavern.* A tavern in Mitre Court, off Fleet Street, famous for its literary associations.

35 25. *Lord Mansfield* (1704–1793), was Chief-Justice of the King's Bench.

36 4. *Macpherson.* James Macpherson, or McPherson (1738–

1796), who professed to have found in the Highlands of Scotland fragments of ancient poetry in Gaelic, "translations" of which he published in 1762 under the title, *Fingal, an Epic Poem, in Six Books, by Ossian.* The authenticity of this work was doubted, and critics demanded a view of the original poems ; but Macpherson died without disclosing the originals of his professed discoveries.

36 28. *The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNicols, and Hendersons.* The curious student will be interested to look up the references to these critics in the index to Hill's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson.*

36 35. *Maxime, si tu vis*, etc. "Most earnestly do I desire, if you are willing, to measure my strength with you."

37 12. *Bentley.* Richard Bentley (1662–1742), an English critic and famous classical scholar.

37 28. *Taxation no Tyranny.* This work was intended as an answer to Burke's *Speech on Conciliation with America.*

38 22. *Wilson.* Richard Wilson (1714–1782), an eminent English landscape painter.

38 30. *Cowley.* Abraham Cowley (1618–1667).

38 35. *The Restoration.* The restoration (1660) of the Stuart kings, after the Commonwealth and the Protectorates of Oliver Cromwell and his son Richard.

39 6. *The wits of Button.* Button was the proprietor of a coffee house where political and literary wits resorted in the early part of the eighteenth century. *Cibber.* Colley Cibber (1671–1757), a second-rate English actor and playwright, appointed poet-laureate in 1730. See Boswell's *Johnson.*

39 7. *Orrery.* The fifth earl of Orrery, author of a *Life of Swift.* See Boswell's *Johnson.*

39 8. *Swift.* Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), the celebrated wit and satirist. His life and works should be looked up in detail. See Johnson's sketch in *Lives of the Poets.*

39 9. *Services of no very honourable kind.* Savage had been associated with Pope in the publication of the *Dunciad.*

39 19. "*The Lives of the Poets.*" See Bibliography.

40 17. *Malone.* Edmund Malone (1741–1812), a celebrated critic and commentator on Shakespeare.

41 28. *A music-master from Brescia.* His name was Piozzi.

This attachment was not so "degrading" as Macaulay makes it seem. See the brief article "Piozzi" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. For a picture of Mrs. Thrale (born Hester Lynch), afterward Mrs. Piozzi, see Hogarth's engraving, "The Lady's Last Stake."

42 8. *A solemn and tender prayer.* "Almighty God, Father of all mercy, help me by thy grace, that I may, with humble and sincere thankfulness, remember the comforts and conveniences which I have enjoyed at this place; and that I may resign them with holy submission, equally trusting in thy protection when thou givest and when thou takest away. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me. To thy fatherly protection, O Lord, I commend this family. Bless, guide, and defend them, that they may so pass through this world, as finally to enjoy thy everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen."—Boswell's *Johnson*.

42 24. *The Ephesian matron.* A character in a Latin story (by Petronius), who, from grief, descended with the corpse of her husband into the vault to die, and there fell in love with a soldier sent to guard the dead. The whole story is told in the last section of the last chapter of Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Dying*.

42 25. *The two pictures.* See *Hamlet*, Act III., Sc. iv. For some of the letters that passed between Johnson and Mrs. Piozzi see Scoone's *Four Centuries of English Letters*.

43 25. *Windham.* William Windham (1750–1810), Secretary for War in Lord Grenville's ministry.

43 27. *Frances Burney*, afterward Madame D'Arblay (1752–1840), author of *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, two well-known novels of the time. See Macaulay's *Essay on Madame D'Arblay*.

43 29. *Langton.* See page 30.

The first aim in studying this piece of prose, as has already been said (see page xxxvii.), must be to understand what Macaulay has written, to give these pages of his so careful a study as to be able to explain accurately and definitely any passage in it. As an aid in conducting this process and in attaining this result—a clear understanding of the text—the preceding Explanatory Notes have been added. They are intended to touch briefly on the more important references and allusions with which a pupil may be unfamiliar. But it is the pupil that must extend and

complete the work Much has been passed over without comment, from a conviction that it is wise to force the young student to depend as little as possible on notes, and as much as possible on his own efforts, in judging what information he really needs, and how he may best secure it. However he does it, the pupil must master the text of Macaulay's *Life of Johnson* as thoroughly as he would the text of Cicero's *Oration against Catiline*. The *Life* is prescribed for actual *study*, not for *reading*, and the student must not leave it until he has gone through it word by word, allusion by allusion, sentence by sentence. He must understand exactly what Macaulay meant. That does not necessarily imply that he should know all about every character to whom Macaulay refers, but it does mean that he should know enough about the subject of each reference to understand why it was made. To assist the pupil in testing the extent and accuracy of this preliminary study, the following questions have been prepared, to which answers will not be found in the preceding Explanatory Notes. They will indicate the sort of understanding of the text that the pupil must in some way attain. A few may appear trivial; but whoever has gone conscientiously through the labor of preparing boys for college in English will realize that seemingly trivial questions are often not without value. Simple things are easily overlooked.

Specimen Questions on the Text: for Oral Review or Written Examination. — What does Macaulay mean by *Augustan delicacy of taste* (2 26)? Is Latin taught in England in a way to which we are not accustomed? Why *gown* (4 2)? Explain *refracted* (5 28), *registrar* (6 4), *ceruse* (6 31), *ordinaries* (9 21). Define *sycophancy* (9 28). Just what is meant by *parts* (11 13)? By *pilloried*, *mangled with the shears*, *whipped at the cart's tail* (11 27)? By *hack* (13 6)? By *Jewish rabbis and Christian fathers* (13 23)? Why *palm* (16 8)? Is *carcase* (16 17) a familiar word? What does *acidulated* mean (17 15)? Why *closet* (17 29)? What is a *turgid* style (19 15)? Comment on *are known to everybody* (19 29). What is the difference between the *authority of a Dictator* and *that of a Pope* (21 1, 2)? What is a *folio* (21 4)? What is the derivation, and what the meaning, of *lexicographer* (21 18), *etymologist* (21 29)? What is meant by *sheets* (22 35)?

By *epithet* (23 20) ? By *women are married without ever being seen* (24 12) ? Define *adjured* (26 24). To what language does *Pomposo* belong (26 32) ? What is meant by *happy conjectural emendation* (27 15) ? By *period* (28 34) ? What is the *Southern Cross* (30 30) ? Explain *quarto* (31 32). How could Johnson have an *apartment* at a *brewery* (32 26) ? What is a *squire* (34 32) ? Explain *Celtic* (35 1). Why is the line quoted a *detestable Latin hexameter* (36 34) ? Why *at that season* (38 28) ? What is meant by *poetasters* (39 3) ? Explain the reference in *Cibber, who had mutilated the plays of two generations of dramatists* (39 6, 7) ? What is the meaning, and what the derivation, of *anfractuosities* (44 28), and why does Macaulay use the word ?

Not even when the pupil has mastered the full meaning of the text, word for word, and sentence for sentence, is it safe to assume that he has Macaulay's ideas thoroughly in mind. That must be made certain by requiring careful summaries. The pupil should reduce the thought of each paragraph to a single sentence, should determine what are the main ideas of the whole composition, and then make a scheme of the structure. Such a plan from Macaulay's *Essay on Milton* is here reprinted [1] as a good example of what a thoughtful analysis of a similar piece of writing should show.

§§ 1–8. Prefatory Remarks. Description of a theological work by John Milton, lately discovered.

§§ 8–49. First Division of the Essay : Milton's Poetry.

§§ 8–18. First topic : Is Milton's place among the greatest masters ? Yes, for he triumphed over the difficulty of writing poetry in the midst of a highly civilized society. A discussion of the relation of poetry to civilization.

§§ 18–20. Second topic : Milton's Latin poetry.

§§ 20–25. Third topic : Some striking characteristics of Milton's poetic methods. A description of the effect produced by the peculiar suggestiveness of the words he uses. Examples, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso.*

§§ 25–30. Fourth topic : Milton's dramatic poetry. Like the

[1] From Mr. Croswell's edition of Macaulay's *Essay on Milton,* in this series.

Greek drama, it has much of the lyric character. The Greek drama and *Samson Agonistes; Comus* and the Italian Masques.

§§ 30–47. Fifth topic: *Paradise Lost.* Parallel between Milton and Dante. A discussion of Milton's superiority in the management of the agency of supernatural beings.

§§ 47–49. Sixth topic: The sonnets.

§§ 49–87. Second Division of the Essay: Milton's conduct as a citizen. The conduct of his party associates. §§ 49–72. First topic: Milton's joining the party of the Parliament in 1642. §§ 49–51. Under the impressions derived from seventeenth and eighteenth century literature, many Englishmen fail to see that the Long Parliament was defending principles of government accepted by all England since 1688, and now struggling for recognition in the rest of the world. §§ 51–57. The rebellion of Parliament against Charles I. is therefore justified by a comparison, point by point, with the glorious Revolution dethroning James II. §§ 57–72. Admitting, then, the justice of Parliament's quarrel with the king, was their rebellion too strong a measure? When are revolutions justified?

§§ 72–78. Second topic: Milton's association with the Regicides and Cromwell. §§ 72–75. The execution of Charles not so very different a measure from the deposition of James. But even if one disapproves of the regicide, one may admit the necessity of defending it at that time. §§ 75–78. Discussion of Cromwell's good government compared with Parliament's betrayal of trust on one side and the Stuart misgovernment on the other.

§§ 78–87. Third topic: Milton's contemporaries classified and described. §§ 79–84. The Puritans. § 84. The Heathens. § 85. The Royalists. § 86. Milton's own character compounded of many different strains.

§§ 87–92. Third Division of the Essay: Milton's Prose-writings. His pamphlets devoted to the emancipation of human thought.

§§ 92 to End. Conclusion. A vision of Milton.

After a scheme of the thought has been made, in this or some other fashion equally good, the pupil should write a number of short essays, each of which should have for its object the reproduction in the pupil's own language, and on a smaller scale, of the ideas contained in one of the large divisions of the *Life.*

CRITICAL NOTE

Under this heading are gathered certain detailed suggestions as to the further study of Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*. Up to this point we have considered only a single part of our work—that pertaining to the understanding of the text. The pupil must not stop here, however, nor slacken his efforts. The pleasantest part of his task remains undone. We have yet to see (1) what we can gain from a study of Macaulay's style, (2) what we can gain by considering the truth, appropriateness, or suggestiveness of Macaulay's ideas, and (3) what progress we can make, after this introduction by Macaulay, in the study of Johnson's life and times and in the enjoyment of his works and those of his contemporaries. In such matters teacher and pupils must be left largely to their own devices, but a few hints may seasonably be given under the successive heads of Rhetorical Study, Suggestive Study, and Literary Study.

Rhetorical Study. Rhetorical work in the preparatory schools should have simply the aim of enabling pupils to write simply, clearly, and correctly. Minute precept, the philosophy and logic of expression, detailed analysis of style—all these are subjects for college work. To write simply, clearly, and correctly is all that can reasonably be asked of a sub-Freshman. Fluency, grace, beauty, power—all these may be inculcated later. Simplicity, clearness, and correctness are the essential qualities, and no one is a better teacher of them than Macaulay. Fine critics have found fault with his style, but they cannot deny that it has proved the most successful prose style of the century. Success means something. To receive wide and long continued approbation a style must have the very best of qualities. Macaulay is an excellent model.

The student has two things to do if he would get the most out of Macaulay's style. First, he must like it and learn the "tune"

of it. That is the main thing. He should pick out the finest passages in the *Life*, read them aloud again and again, perhaps even memorize short parts of them, until he gets the "swing" of the style. Then he should choose from matters familiar to him a subject of the sort that Macaulay liked,[1] and try to treat it after the Macaulay fashion, reading his essay aloud with emphatic vigor to see if it has the proper ring. The process of imitation leads inevitably to *analysis*. Just how does Macaulay secure his results? he must ask himself, and that means that he and his classmates must go systematically to work to analyze Macaulay's style. The task is not a hard one. Long paragraphs, short sentences, balanced or parallel structure in sentences and paragraphs, a wide vocabulary of dignified and picturesque words—this is what his instructor will help him to find, and, having found the secret of the method, he will go on to apply it. He will choose particular typical sentences of Macaulay's and match them with similarly constructed sentences of his own on a different topic. If he can do that well, he has learned a lesson that will long stand him in good stead.

Suggestive Study. It will be disappointing if the pupil reads Macaulay blindly, or imitates him blindly. Macaulay is famous for expressing clearly and vigorously ideas worth thinking of. The student must keep his mind open to ideas, full of curiosity. Not only will he be impressed by the main point of the essay—the vivid delineation of Johnson's character, not only will he be thrilled with sympathy and admiration, but he will find food for reflection on almost every page. Take a single illustration from the very first paragraph. "That Augustan delicacy of taste," says Macaulay, speaking of English schoolboys. "Classical writers who were quite unknown to the best scholars in the sixth form at Eton," he continues. Evidently some English boys may actually have a delicate taste in points of Latin usage at an age when most American boys are thankful if they can stumble through Virgil or Cicero. Evidently some English boys have really a wide range of Latin literature at their command. What makes the difference? Why are we ignorant where they are wise?

[1] Following the excellent method outlined by Mr. E. L. Miller. See the Suggestions to Teachers and Students in his edition of Southey's *Life of Nelson* in this series.

Are the tables turned in other fields of knowledge? What is there sound and good in our own education? Such chance questionings the instructor should deliberately encourage. Few boys know how to keep their minds active as they read. Even suggestions so random as those just indicated with regard to the English system of classical education might be the beginning, in a young student's mind, of an exceedingly profitable train of thought. It is obviously impossible, however, for any editor to indicate more than the general character of such suggestive study. The whole process must be left, for the most part, to the pupil himself, who, with the encouragement of the instructor, should, from time to time, try to sum up, not Macaulay's ideas, but the results of his own thinking on matters which his study of Macaulay has suggested.

Literary Study. Valuable as the two kinds of training just mentioned are, they should be wholly subordinate to the study of the *Life* as an introduction to a wider knowledge and enjoyment of English literature. Luckily, the book looks two ways, opening an easy avenue on the one hand to Macaulay, and on the other to Johnson. Both were interesting men, and both belonged to interesting periods of literature. To which author and to which group the student turns his attention, it makes little difference. The main thing is that he should read—read with zest, and read with appreciation. But here also the teacher and the pupil must be left to their own devices. With interest and earnestness one cannot, in this field, go far astray—particularly in dealing with a book so full of references to the best known literary figures of the eighteenth century. Even if the student does nothing more than grow familiar with Boswell's *Johnson* and some of Macaulay's best essays, he has accomplished something that will contribute directly and in no small degree towards laying the foundations of a liberal education.

MACAULAY'S

ESSAY ON ADDISON

EDITED

WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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PREFACE

It is hard for an editor of a book designed for formal study to determine precisely what parts of the learning that has gathered about his subject should be offered directly, by way of annotation, to young students. Two methods of treatment at once suggest themselves. He may annotate the text very sparingly, on the assumption that an intelligent boy knows enough to read ordinary English prose literature understandingly, and should be forced to find out for himself the meaning of words or allusions that he does not comprehend. Or he may annotate profusely, on the much sounder assumption that boys and girls are not living dictionaries and encyclopædias, and scarcely ought to be expected to interrupt reading which they are encouraged to enjoy in order to search various volumes for information that might just as well be put at once before them. Both extremes the editor of the present volume has tried to avoid. He has endeavored to give the pupil such facts as will enable him to read rapidly and understandingly; he has endeavored also to stimulate in the pupil an intelligent curiosity with regard to matters worth further investigation and further knowledge. It is his belief, however, that in the editing of text-books, as in all other parts of the teacher's delicate task, unchecked devotion to any theory of work, sound though it be, may very well lead to disaster to some pupils. He hopes, therefore, that those of his colleagues who use this book will understand that he has tried to prepare it for various uses, thinking of different classes

of pupils, at different periods of ripeness. If the annotation is for any purpose too full, it is far easier to neglect any excess than to supply a real and painful deficiency that might arise in reading Macaulay under the ordinary conditions of the classroom.

This edition of Macaulay's essay follows the authoritative text, of which Longmans, Green, and Co. are the publishers.

J. G. C.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION ix

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS xxviii

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE xxxii

ESSAY ON ADDISON 1

INTRODUCTION

[The essay on Addison, besides illustrating the life of an author whose works are to be read in preparation for college, has a general interest as being a well-constructed and brilliantly successful "review-article." This type of essay-writing one may almost assert to have been invented by the Edinburgh Reviewers, of which famous coterie Macaulay was one of the greatest. His essays are classic specimens of the type.

Macaulay was not one of the founders of that periodical. It originated in 1802 among a number of young men of the generation before him, whose interests—social, literary, and political,—brought them together in Edinburgh. The most famous were Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, the witty divine who instigated the enterprise, Henry Brougham, and Francis Horner. They were Liberals or "Whigs" in politics, and full of fight for their side in all public questions. The merit of the work of these talented young "journalists," the novelty of the enterprise, and what was thought to be the daring of the views expressed in these articles on various questions of the day, made the *Edinburgh* a rallying point for the popular party in English politics, and gave to the "Buff and Blue" magazine a wide circulation. The Tory party started the *Quarterly Review* to meet it, and the *Westminster Review* was begun later by a new set of young "Radicals," who found the *Edinburgh* too slow for them; both thus paying it the flattery of imitation. Even to the present day the form of these essays is, to a great degree, followed in certain periodicals, especially in the following particulars, which it will interest young students to notice.

It was thought needful by the *Edinburgh* writers, while they were treating their subjects, in truth, in the most general way, to connect their discursive harangues with a criticism of some definite book lately published. Thus, Macaulay begins his essay on Addison with a hasty criticism of Miss Aikin's "Life of Addison." But once he gets into his article a little way, the reviewer abandons his intended task, and proceeds to develop his own opinions about the character and conduct of Addison from the standpoint of his own party, the "Whigs of 1832." In the process of treating these questions, he rambles off into short excursions upon kindred subjects, wholly ignoring the book under review, and giving himself the privilege of unburdening his soul upon any political questions which interest him, or

entering upon literary criticism or general topics of the day, as we should do in modern magazine articles, which are more frankly devoted to general discussions. Other likenesses and differences between the *Edinburgh* articles and their modern equivalents will interest the student of English literature in its present manifestations, but they are not essential to the understanding and appreciation of the text, and space does not allow us to discuss them here.]

1. A BRIEF summary of English politics after the Puritan commonwealth ended will perhaps help the reader in following the historical allusions of the essay. The Restoration days were not altogether easy times. England had taken up her Stuart monarchy in 1660, as a refuge from the worse trouble of anarchy, as a man returns, for necessary protection against bad weather, to an old garment once discarded. It did not protect her very well. There were, to be sure, no more sufferings from ostentatious tyranny on the part of King Charles, no rebellious Parliaments in arms against royal authority; but for fifty years more there were continual movements of political parties for the overthrow of government. Protestants suspected Catholics, and passed severe penal laws against that religion. Tories suspected Whigs and procured severe laws against Protestant Dissenters. The side which got uppermost in politics condemned and executed its opponents. Such a disturbance was the Papist Plot in 1678, whose story was probably a figment composed by a band of needy adventurers who made their living as witnesses. For some reason the government pretended to believe them, and many wholly innocent Catholics lost their lives as plotters against the king. In 1680 a bill to exclude James, the king's brother, from the throne because he had become a Catholic, passed the House of Commons. The king dissolved the Parliament and summoned a new one at Oxford, hoping that the memories of the civil war and the loyalty of that old university might affect the disposition

of the members. The conduct of this Parliament, called the "Oxford Parliament," however, was so stubborn and insolent as to create a reaction in the country in favor of the king. Charles dissolved this Parliament after a session of only a few days, and the reaction continued. By 1683 the Tories had won the public confidence again. Some secret party schemes of certain great Whig nobles were discovered by the Tories, and at the same time there came out a plot cooked up by some villainous hangers-on of the Whig party to assassinate the king and his brother near the "Rye-house," a farm on the way from London to Newmarket. By a malicious confusion of the two "plots," Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney were found guilty of treason and executed. But the death of Charles in 1685 brought his Catholic brother to the throne of England. The Roman danger, from which English Protestantism had been safe, since the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, reappeared in startling form. All other issues were swallowed up in this. In three years James had so alarmed all parties by his tyrannical acts, in connection with his efforts to re-establish the Catholic religion, that people of all parties joined in inviting the Prince of Orange to enter England with Dutch troops. Thus came about the revolution of 1688, of which Macaulay says so much. Parliament laid before the Prince of Orange, who was a near heir to the crown himself, and whose wife was next heir after James and his children, a "Declaration of Right." It contains once more an assertion of the principles for which the people of England had been fighting through the generation of Milton. Making or suspending laws without consent of Parliament is to cease; ecclesiastical commissions are not to be made into courts; levying money without consent of Parliament is illegal; elections of members of Parliament must be free; and so on. William and Mary accepted the crown then offered them, and were proclaimed king and

queen on condition that they should abide by these principles. Henceforth the Stuart theory of divine right could never be pleaded by any English monarch again. James Stuart and his son, with the adhesion of a smaller number of Englishmen in each generation, represented themselves as kings of England by inheritance till the direct line died out. But the actual monarchs of England have held their authority ever since 1688, not by the law of inheritance, but by the consent of the people. The Stuart theory of divine right was dead.

2. But under the new "constitutional monarchy" a struggle still went on. There still continued to be two parties in politics, the party of progress and reform, inheriting most of the Puritan tradition in church and state, and the party representing the English love of precedent, custom, and conventionality. They called themselves Whig and Tory, cant terms of uncertain origin and no meaning. Addison, like Milton, and, indeed, like Macaulay also in his day, belonged to the party of popular government, the Whigs.

3. In the confusing history of England in Addison's lifetime, this significant fact may be seized and remembered in connection with his career. Almost unconsciously, in the intrigues of the court and the politicians, the great English device of "party-government" was developing—a happy device, avoiding evermore the civil wars and blind revolutions of an earlier day, yet providing freedom for the advance of the English nation toward the democratic ideals of the inevitable future.

4. Under "party-government" in its modern shape, the sovereign selects to conduct the affairs of the nation a committee of councillors, called the Cabinet, giving to each member charge of some important department of the executive work of government. By selecting all this Cabinet from one party, and making it represent the majority

in Parliament, the actual governing body of England, the English "Government" is made to obey the will of the people. The clumsy and cruel decisions of physical force and civil war need not be resorted to in determining the most exciting questions of domestic and foreign policy.

5. When Queen Anne came to the throne in 1702 it cannot be said that this method of government had been properly developed, at least as a regular part of British constitutional procedure. But the activity of parties in her reign brought it forward very far. The Queen found herself faced at her accession by two parties; and she had ties with each. The Tories, on the whole, represented the principles of her family and her own convictions; but the Act of Settlement which made her Queen was a Whig measure. Her friends the Churchills, like herself, were Tories by education. Marlborough, Anne's most trusted adviser, and in fact the whole body of her councillors, were, however, by the influence of the war which England had to fight with Louis XIV., swept over toward a Whig policy and driven to ask for a Whig support. The reason of this war and of England's connection with it was as follows: After the revolution of 1688, which banished James II., England found herself curiously entangled with the politics of the continent. William III., her reigning sovereign, was a Dutchman, with Dutch relationships. The banished Stuarts took refuge at the court of Louis XIV., the great historic representative of absolute monarchy (*l'état, c'est moi*), and enlisted the active aid of France in restoring them to the English throne. The next heirs to the Stuarts were the German princes of Hanover. It is no wonder that the English politics of Addison's lifetime dealt largely with foreign alliances and foreign dynastic questions. The great question of all was, briefly put, how far in general the power of Louis XIV. (*le roi soleil*) was to extend over Europe, and whether England and the other

powers were to become subservient to his interests. Naturally Louis represented everything that was hostile to England's future growth and her present cherished convictions and hopes. He was the great Roman Catholic prince, heading the Anti-Protestant party in Europe. He was an absolute monarch, like the Stuarts she had just turned out, the support and example of all the princely tyrants of his day and long after. Moreover, he was a dangerous monarch. He had created a military despotism of almost irresistible power. He was served by the best soldiers and the most cunning diplomats of his time. Even the genuine glory of his reign, the graceful culture, that æsthetic superiority of French society which extended French ideals irresistibly over the life and literature of all Europe, became too tyrannical in the end to be wholesome. To make head against all this tyranny, then, merely to save the life of the other races of Europe, vigorous resistance was demanded. The world needed an alliance of all who represented any human hope not included in the conceptions of life in vogue at the French court. When, therefore, on the decay of the Spanish reigning house, Louis seemed likely to get control of the resources of Spain, all Europe, with England at the head, rose against him. This was the meaning of Queen Anne's French war, which Marlborough was waging as Captain-General of the English forces, in alliance with the Dutch, Prince Eugene, the House of Savoy, and the Imperial German houses ; this gave the great valne to Marlborough's victories of Blenheim, Ramillies, and Oudenarde. This made it impossible even for the Jacobites and Tories of England to avoid seeking support from the Whig party against France, even though France supported the Tory Pretender to the English throne. But the results of this confusion of purposes in the court and cabinet of Queen Anne produced a series of vacillations and cross-currents in her own policy. The changes of ministry in

her reign, though not regular, may be summarized as follows: (*a*) *From 1702–1708* (*drift toward the Whigs*). She leaned at her accession first to the Tory party, making the Tory leaders, Harley and Godolphin, her chief ministers and refusing to appoint Whigs. But the war and the influence of Marlborough, the Captain-General, working largely through the curious submissive friendship of the Queen for the Duchess of Marlborough, drove them all slowly over to the Whig party. As the victories of Blenheim and Ramillies made England glorious, and the Whigs powerful, the Queen dismissed her Tories and appointed Whigs. She did it with reluctance. Of the "Junto," as the Whig leaders were called (Somers, Halifax, Oxford, Wharton, and Sunderland), she hated the last two personally, as much as she liked Harley. But she put Somers, Cowper, and even Sunderland and Wharton into power, and dismissed Harley. This movement brought Addison into office, first under Godolphin, and then under Wharton. Godolphin and Marlborough identified themselves with the Whigs, scandalizing the high Tories, but escaping dismissal. (*b*) *From 1708–1710* (*the Whigs in power; Tory reaction*). The Queen's policy drifted back to the Tory side. She transferred her personal affections to Mrs. Masham, a cousin of Harley, who represented the Tory intrigue. The feelings of her subjects also turned against the costly war and the statesmen who carried it on. Then, in an unlucky moment, Godolphin undertook to prosecute a clergyman, Dr. Sacheverell, for preaching a sermon against the war and the ministers. The prosecution failed; and the Queen, who was a high-church woman, supported by the general feeling of the nation, treated the injured divine as a martyr. She dismissed Godolphin and one after another of the Whigs. In 1710 a new election gave a Tory majority in Parliament, and Harley came back to power as Lord Treasurer. (*c*) *From 1710–1714* (*the Tories in power*). The Tories gov-

erned until the fear of a Stuart restoration restored the Whigs. Once more, when George I. was made King, the Whig party became again all powerful, holding office steadily till the accession of George III., and representing the Protestant principles and the Hanoverian succession.

6. Addison's fortunes carried him deep into these party-politics of the reign of Anne. In the conditions of this new world, he played, in a sense, the useful part of modern editors in great contests of national politics. The needs of the Whig cause, bound "to own no force but argument," required, as Macaulay shows, the help of clever pens; and the Whig leaders were lucky to find one in Addison. It is an interesting story to read,—and Macaulay tells it well,—how the young Fellow of Magdalen, by the extremely characteristic eighteenth century method of writing Latin verse, first came to the notice of the University men, who then as now were forward in the councils of the English state and church; how he became under their patronage at first a writer of what might be called "Government poetry" for the Whigs; and then, with his friend Steele, discovered and mastered the great new form of literature, the periodical magazine, producing the immortal *Tatler* and *Spectator*, and their less known competitors. Not even Roman satire is more characteristic of its national origin than these essays. The papers of the *Tatler* are living pictures of the Englishmen who invented them. Even when they do not contain political "leading-articles" in the strict sense, they are filled with the soul of the English Whigs of Queen Anne's reign. Human life in them is a practical problem, like the problems of politics. To live it well men must argue and debate its questions, decide them for good and sufficient reasons, and abide by the decision. But under this fundamental notion of an argumentative criticism of life, in calm and unimpassioned debate, the essayist continually introduces, in the guise of

evidence and testimony upon questions at issue, vivid pictures of contemporary life based upon his observation of human nature. His propositions and the testimony to them are carefully stated in clear and graceful English prose; the air of a quiet speaker to an intelligent assembly is maintained; though it is but a dull hearer who cannot recognize, in spite of some characteristic conventionalities of form, an expression of some of the deepest and tenderest experiences of the English nature. Even if we cannot now take these writings at their true value, at least we still can trace in them the undoubted origin of such forms of literature as at present do mean the most to all of us. The *Tatler* essays are the true ancestors of the modern novel, the modern magazine, and the modern newspaper. Everything that has been accomplished by English literature, in these three great departments, was lying in the path that Steele and Addison "blazed out" at the beginning of the eighteenth century, with their pioneer periodicals, which they intended to be mirrors of contemporary life and thought.

7. Among the statesmen who, fortunately for English literature, discovered Addison, the most interesting person was his first patron, Charles Montague, also known in the essay as Halifax, from his title. Montague began, like Addison, as a scholar and a writer of Latin verse. He was intended, like Addison, to be a clergyman. But he left literature and divinity and entered Parliament. There he became one of the Whig leaders, and helped not a little to bring about the Revolution of 1689. He displayed a wonderful ability as Lord Treasurer of King William, and will always be remembered, not only for discovering Addison, the founder of modern English prose, but for initiating the three characteristic features of modern English finance—the Bank of England, the national debt, and the sterling and stable currency. His interesting life may be read in Macaulay's "History of England."

8. Another of Addison's early patrons was Lord Chancellor Somers,[1] to whom he dedicated his "Travels in Italy," the great lawyer, worker, and Whig politician, famous as John Locke's patron, not less than for the help he gave Addison. Another patron of later date was Lord Cowper, first Lord Chancellor of Great Britain. He is famous not only as a great Whig lawyer, but for actions transcending partisanship, such as his opposing Marlborough's desire to be made captain-general for life. In fact, Addison's path in life brought him in contact with the foremost Englishmen of his time.[2] Another public man of great interest is Sidney Godolphin, the Lord Treasurer of Anne, who gave Addison the commission to write the "Campaign." He was the faithful servant, said by Charles II. to be "never in the way and never out of the way," afterwards minister of James II., and favorite counsellor of Anne, who though a Tory in feeling, knew how to co-operate with the Whigs, as the "October Club" did not. Until Sacheverell attacked him he was ever the judicious adviser and calm counsellor of the Cabinet. Through his fatal impeachment of that divine, he ruined his own life and the Whig cause. Nor should the student of Addison forget Harley, Earl of Oxford. Though head of the Tory party in Anne's reign, he rose from the humblest beginnings, through a history far more characteristic of a Whig politician, by tact, brains, and debating power, to be one of the greatest Tory nobles of England and the favored minister of Queen Anne. His immense aptitude for the business of government, his indifference to principle, and talent for intrigue, made him, within the limits of his situation,

[1] For his connection with important events in King William's reign, see Macaulay's *History of England*.

[2] It will be well for the student to look up, for example, in the index to Macaulay's *History*, the names of Sunderland, Shrewsbury, Cowper, and Wharton.

the most successful contemporary politician. Perhaps the most brilliant of all that are mentioned in this essay, however, was Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, whose many interests can only be alluded to here.[1] Last but not least, there is to be studied with respect the great Marlborough, and his equally great wife, Sarah Jennings. It is true that Addison's contact with them is but slight. Yet the hero of the "Campaign" and the maker of history in this reign is not to be ignored, though his biography cannot be properly discussed at the end of a paragraph. Students should consult Mrs. Creighton's "Life of Marlborough," that of Lord Wolseley, or that of Mr. Saintsbury.

9. It will hardly be necessary for any one who has read Macaulay's essay to look elsewhere for biographical material of Addison. Macaulay has traced with much particularity the course of his life, following Miss Aikin's exhaustive work in its details. If one wishes more, Courthope's "Addison," in the English Men of Letters Series, serves to bring out in a more careful perspective view some facts about Addison which Macaulay distorts in the fervor of his eloquent descriptions.

10. Of late years there has been a great deal of historical work about Addison's contemporaries, as there has been a sort of revival in interest for the habits and customs of our ancestors of Queen Anne's day. Old silver, old furniture, old architecture charm our present caprice and, under the modern historic taste, such books as Ashton's "Social Life of Queen Anne," Sydney's "England in the Eighteenth Century," and Morris's "Age of Anne" in the Epochs of History Series, have made easy of acquisition much of the

[1] The student who wishes to know more of these great men may look in Lord Stanhope's *Reign of Queen Anne*, and Lord Mahon's *History of England*. See also the opening chapters of Morley's *Walpole*. Good articles upon them will also be found in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

close information about the period which Macaulay says it is desirable to have in studying Addison. Justin McCarthy's two volumes on the reign of Queen Anne are, in his fashion, very readable.

11. Two or three matters of interest may here be recommended to general students. No one can get the full flavor of the social life of the time who does not study the London coffee-houses, taverns, and clubs. The coffee-houses were much like modern clubs. In each were found every day its own characteristic set of frequenters, sipping coffee or "mineral-water," writing letters, reading the "news-sheets," transacting business, or playing cards. It is said that in 1715 there were as many as two thousand coffee-houses in London. Each had its own clients. Literary men went to "Will's" or "Buttons" or the "Grecian," merchants to "Jonathan's," Whigs to the "St. James," Tories to the "Cocoa-Tree."[1] There were also clubs of a more definite organization. The "October Club" is thus described by Swift: "We are plagued here with an October Club, a set of above a hundred parliament men of the country, who drink October beer, and meet every evening at a tavern near the Parliament to consult affairs, and to drive things on to extremes against the Whigs, to call the old ministry to account and get off five or six heads." The rival Whig club was the "Kit-Cat." It contained a galaxy of wits and statesmen. "Peg Woffington," the actress, was at one time its president. Halifax, Somers, Addison, Congreve, Vanbrugh, the Dukes of Somerset, Devonshire, Marlborough, Newcastle, the Earls of Dorset, Sutherland, Sir Robert Walpole, and many other great people were members.[2]

12. Interesting subjects would be found in the investigation of the education of youth in those days; the posi-

[1] See the first numbers of the *Tatler* for a list of fashionable coffee-houses.

[2] For a full account of these things see Sydney's *England*, Vol. I., Chapter IV.

tion, social and civic, of scholars and literary men; the life at the Universities; the character of the scholarship and the thought of the country; as well as the history of the bookmaking and bookselling of the period. Some of these questions connect themselves with Addison's own history. At school, under the discipline of the rod, he learned the current classical lore, of which Latin was more attentively studied than Greek, and the forms of Latin far more than the contents. The culmination of such an education was to get ability in Latin verse composit'on. Few reached anything noteworthy in such an artificial accomplishment, though every boy pursued it. Hence Addison's gift was valued and admired by a wide public, and hence the great and admirable talents of Bentley, who is now seen to be the only scholar of any profitable type in a whole generation of English classicists, were only half understood and greatly undervalued by contemporary English scholars, because he dealt scientifically with the classics, with matter as well as form, and with the original Greek rather than the devious traditions of Italy and Rome. Addison's "grand tour" after leaving Magdalen, again indicates the type of the regular genteel English education, though Addison was of course a man who made something of it, just as he did of his Latin verse, where others did not.

13. The good luck of the authors born at this period would be another subject of interest. The literary world in the "Augustan Age" of Queen Anne was in the height of fashion. Places and appointments were showered on successful writers; ministries rivalled each other in recognizing talent; authors lived with noblemen, and noblemen affected to be authors. The men who wrote the *Tatler* and *Spectator* had the same lives, the same ambitions, and the same hopes, successes, and failures as the social leaders and statesmen of the aristocracy. The cause of this phenome-

non has been described by Macaulay in pp. 57–59; it is all the more odd because there is no evidence that Queen Anne herself was fond of literature or art. For any parallel to the social conditions of authorship under Anne we must come down to the reign of Victoria; and it may well be doubted if even here the social valuation placed upon wit and talent has ever been relatively so high as in Anne's reign. In the reign of the Georges all this good fortune was changed; the horrors of Grub Street set in, as exhibited in the life of Samuel Johnson, who was born before Addison died, and who starved and grew prematurely old in the same profession as Addison's, within the very next generation of Englishmen.

14. One should refer to larger works than this for treatment of these interesting topics. Among the most valuable will be the classic novel of Thackeray, "Henry Esmond." Thackeray depicts as few historical novelists have ever done the vanished life that Macaulay is here studying. It is a marvellous reproduction of the distant scene of Anne's reign; the dead figures move again, in habit as they lived, following the course of events with historic accuracy; while yet the story marches on with the freedom and vivacity of untrammelled imaginative fiction. Thackeray may not be always trustworthy. Possibly Steele is drawn of too light a character, as he is also in Macaulay's essay; very likely the love-story is a little out of keeping, and Henry Esmond himself rather an anachronism. But it remains a remarkable work of art and one of the best places in the world to study the age of Addison.[1]

15. The character of Addison himself, his prudence, modesty, good temper, and social charm, is on the whole well described by Macaulay. Its distinctive traits are brought out very clearly, as they appeared in his writings,

[1] See also *Historical Characters of the Reign of Queen Anne*, by Mrs. Oliphant.

and in the evidence of his contemporaries. Thackeray has drawn the same Addison, with some exaggerations of traits, in the "English Humourists" and in "Henry Esmond." There is a very good biographical article upon Addison by Leslie Stephen in the "Dictionary of National Biography," and another by William Spalding, in the "Encyclopædia Britannica." Courthope's "Addison," in the English Men of Letters Series, has already been mentioned. Out of any of these a clear picture of that fair character may without trouble be derived by the student.

16. There is in the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," as is well-known, a famous characterization of Addison at the hand of Pope, which ought to be compared with these, and which, though preserving the same general picture, gives a different kind of meaning to the character. For convenience of reference it is here printed.

"Peace to all such! but were there one whose fires
True Genius kindles and fair Fame inspires;
Blest with each talent and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease:
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
Alike reserved to blame, or to command,
A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend;
Dreading ev'n fools, by flatterers besieg'd,
And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd;
Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
And sit attentive to his own applause;
While Wits and Templars every sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise:—
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?"

17. The "little senate" referred to here contains two names worth a mention. Eustace Budgell, Addison's mother's sister's son, was a lawyer, or "Templar," who lived a great deal under Addison's care, and was a sort of private secretary to him, when in office. He is credited with some good papers in the *Spectator*. He separated from Addison before the latter's death, and the later years of his life were clouded with melancholy, ending in suicide at the age of fifty-seven. The other is Thomas Tickell, a mediocre poet, whose success in life was mainly due to the friendship and patronage of Addison. He is to be remembered for three things: first, that his attempt to translate the "Iliad" into English embroiled Addison (most unjustly) with Pope; second, that Addison's kindness in getting Tickell the under-secretaryship of state in 1717 chagrined Steele, and began the coolness between him and his old friend; third, that Tickell's eulogy on Addison is a remarkable instance of how strong feelings produce good poetry from a man not otherwise inspired. Addison made Tickell his literary executor, and he published the first edition of Addison's works.

18. The quarrel with Pope and the quarrel with Steele, such as it was, need not be treated at greater length than is done in the essay. Pope should be further studied for his own sake, however. Perhaps the best plan would be to read Lowell's essay on Pope, or Leslie Stephen's memoir of Pope in the English Men of Letters Series. For the character of Steele's life and work one should certainly not trust to Macaulay. Books to consult are "Selections from the Works of Steele," by G. R. Carpenter; "Steele," by Austin Dobson; "Life of Steele," by G. A. Aitken. Lastly, the great Dean Swift comes into close relations with Addison. Swift's "Journal to Stella" gives an idea of their friendship and its gradual cooling. For the study of Swift, see "Swift," by Leslie Stephen, and Craik's "Life

of Swift." It is certainly interesting that these three, the greatest minds in Addison's circle of friends, did not maintain their intimacy.

19. It is not part of the editor's intention to add to the student's task the close study of the age of Macaulay. But it would be ungrateful to Lord Macaulay not to wish to know anything more of his life than the reading of this essay involves. Trevelyan's biography at least in selections, will be at once a sufficient reference for this purpose, and is for its own sake, as almost a classic biography already, to be suggested to the young student of English literature. Macaulay went on writing for the *Edinburgh Review* a succession of brilliant papers. These were collected and published in 1843, rather against his wishes. He thought them of temporary interest only, and scarcely worthy of preservation in book form. They have, however, remained ever since among the most popular books in the English language. About six thousand copies a year of them in various editions are sold in his native country alone, and the demand for them is so steady as to be, like the demand for herrings in Holland, a sort of index from year to year of the country's prosperity. In 1830 Macaulay entered Parliament, being helped to get a seat there by Lord Lansdowne, who did not know him, but was interested in him by reading his essay on Mill. The most famous of these essays on literary subjects are those on Addison, Milton, Bunyan, and Johnson. On historical subjects the best essays are on Hallam, Temple (thought the best of all by Morison), Pitt, Clive, and Warren Hastings. There are famous passages also in the essay on Ranke's "History of the Popes," and in that on Bacon.

20. Macaulay remained in Parliament through the great contest for reform in Parliament in 1832. His speeches made about that time on the passage of the great Reform Bill are very famous. In 1834 he received an honorable

and lucrative appointment in India. He here lived till 1838, doing excellent work for the government, and for himself reading enormously in the Greek and Latin classics, as was the habit of his life. He then returned to England in 1839 and re-entered political life as member of Parliament for Edinburgh. He continued to write at intervals, bringing out, among the other things which every school-boy knows, the "Lays of Ancient Rome," in 1842. He now began also in the intervals of political life to write his great "History of England." The first volumes of this appeared in 1848, followed by two more in 1855. This work may be called the most popular book of the sort ever printed in English. The publishers were able, in March of 1856, to pay him in one single check £20,000, for his share of the profits of one English edition. The number of editions of this great book is now quite beyond computation; and its sale still often exceeds that of the most popular novel of a year. It made him one of the most famous historians in Europe. But the plan of the work was so great that even with all his wonderful industry it was never finished. It remains, like a broken statue, just as the author left it at his death, not half completed according to his design.

21. Macaulay's political life was full of prosperity, checkered with less adversity than falls to the lot of most politicians. He lost his seat at Edinburgh, but was afterwards triumphantly re-elected. In 1839 he was a member of Lord Melbourne's government. In 1857 he was made Baron Macaulay of Rothley Temple. But the larger part of his interest lay always with his literary and historical work, upon which he labored, till, in 1859, he died, not unprepared by gradually failing health for that event, though it came to him at the early age of fifty-nine. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the Poets' Corner near the statue of Addison. His "Life and Letters," re-

ferred to above, has been published by his nephew, Sir George Trevelyan. It is one of the best biographies ever written, and is again much to be commended to the general reader who desires to know more of a noble man.

22. As to Macaulay's "position in literature," the question may be said to be still undetermined. We wait for a thorough analysis of his work by the critics, and the critics wait for the final judgment of posterity. During his life he was esteemed even beyond measure by his countrymen. After his death came a sort of reaction against this popularity. The tide, however, seems to be setting again the other way. At any rate, no one has ever denied that his narrative power in history is unapproached. And, as Mr. Saintsbury says in his latest criticism of Macaulay, he is certainly a very great man of letters, and "an unsurpassed leader to reading."

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

I. The first purpose in the mind of both teachers and students must be to use this essay of Macaulay, as the author intended all his essays to be used, not so much as an object of study in itself as a help toward the study of the author to whom it is dedicated. Of course it should be read carefully and intelligently, with due attention to the significance of the wealth of allusions by which Macaulay often conveys points in his discussions—points not to be understood by one who is ignorant of the general facts alluded to. The important thing, however, is that the pupil should learn, through Macaulay, to know Addison, and should keep this purpose uppermost in his mind in all his study of the essay.

II. This object will be served by asking the students to make outline sketches of the contents of this essay and of the several topics handled in it. Written summaries may be composed in the class extempore, or given from memory after preparation. Students may also be asked to study the Introduction in the same way. The Introduction is supposed to put the student in an attitude of general intelligence toward the essay itself and the subject treated, as well as this can be managed without much reading in many books. It may not be necessary for the pupils to read the whole Introduction very carefully ; the good teacher will gather from it himself the objects held in view by the editor, and can help his pupils to reach

them in any better way which occurs to him. Much reading in many books, when time permits, is of course a better way, if a pupil means to succeed in getting hold of the whole matter in the best way possible, regardless of time spent. But the editor does not feel that, as things are in the schools, such reading, or the time for such reading, can be assumed to belong to "every school-boy." The actual best way for the actual school-boy must often be to get such ideas from his text-book as will make it possible to read Macaulay understandingly, or not to get them at all.

III. Tests and thorough examinations on the work upon this essay should be given frequently, in connection with the school reading of the "Sir Roger de Coverley Papers." These tests should imply familiarity with this essay of Macaulay's, and with the general situations treated therein. They should also imply reading about Addison's life and political activity—for example, about the Revolution of 1689, something about Louis XIV. and the France of the seventeenth century, William III. and Anne, Marlborough and the Wars of the Spanish Succession, and the struggle of Whigs and Tories down to the accession of George I. They should imply also that the student has derived an unconscious participation in Macaulay's own attitude about this history, and has begun to criticise in Macaulay's fashion, with Macaulay's help, not only the people and the subjects here treated, but other kindred topics, particularly perhaps Macaulay himself. All this, it is supposed, will be produced by studying these subjects, with the help of the notes, the Introduction, and the parallel readings recommended.

IV. As to rhetorical study of this essay and criticism of Macaulay, tempting as it is, it ought to be subordinated to the historical work described above. The teacher must be

guided by his respect for the immaturity of his scholars, the shortness of the time at his command, the relations of the parts of school work to each other. Younger pupils must doubtless be drilled in the vocabulary of Macaulay Older pupils may discuss to advantage certain rhetorical subjects, using Macaulay as a provision of materials and examples. For example, this essay illustrates beautifully the periodic and the loose sentence, climaxes, re-statement of one idea in several forms, studied variety in wording, illustration and proof, parallel construction, "particularity," figures of speech, similes and metaphors, antithesis, pungent contrasts, balanced expression, epigram and paradox, Biblical phraseology and cadence, alteration of long and short sentences, artistic inversion and interrogation. The teacher, and better still, the pupil, will find his own examples. Any standard text-book in rhetoric will serve as a guide.

V. Students should have access to a library containing the necessary reference books. For the study of these essays the following may be suggested as valuable :

(*1*) *General Reference Books:* A good encyclopædia ; "The Century Dictionary," especially the supplementary volume on Names and Places ; Stopford Brooke's "Primer of English Literature ;" Ward's "English Poets ;" Tillinghast's Ploetz's "Epitome of History," and a good atlas.

(*2*) *General Historical Works:* J. R. Green's "History of the English People ;" Gardiner's "Student's History ;" Stanhope's "History of Queen Anne's Reign ;" Lecky's "England in the Eighteenth Century ;" Justin McCarthy's "Reign of Queen Anne ;" and, as manuals, Hale's "Fall of the Stuarts ;" Morris's "Age of Anne" (in the Epochs of History), and "Student's Church History," Second Period.

(*3*) *Addison :* Collected works, edited by Bishop Hurd (Bohn's Standard Library) ; "Selections from the Specta-

tor" (Clarendon Press); "Spectator in London," illustrated, (Seeley & Co.); "Essays of Joseph Addison," chosen and edited by J. R. Green. For biography and criticism, see W. S. Courthope's "Addison;" Thackeray's "Henry Esmond" and "English Humourists," and the life of Addison in Johnson's "Lives of the Poets." A full set of the *Tatler, Spectator,* and *Guardian* would be valuable. Dobson's "Eighteenth Century Essays" contains selections from many contemporary periodicals.

(*4*) *Macaulay:* "Essays;" "History of England;" "Poems" (Longmans, Green, & Co.). For biography and criticism, see Trevelyan's "Macaulay's Life and Letters;" Morison's "Macaulay;" Morley's "Essay on Macaulay," in his Collected Works; Bagehot's "Essay on Macaulay," in his "Miscellanies," Vol. I.; Leslie Stephen's "Macaulay," in his "Hours in a Library" (Third Series); and for later views, "Macaulay's Place in English Literature," by Frederic Harrison, and "Macaulay," by George Saintsbury, in his "Corrected Impressions." For the history of Macaulay's time see the "Period of Reform," by Justin McCarthy, in the Epochs of History Series (Longmans).

See also Macaulay's "Life of Samuel Johnson," edited by H. G. Buehler, in this series, his valuable bibliography, and the remarks in the Introduction.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

ADDISON'S LIFE: 1672–1719. PERIOD OF WHIG REVOLUTION AND AGE OF ANNE.

CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL HISTORY.	HISTORY OF LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.
1678. Peace of Nimuegen; Popish Club of Dr. Oates.	1678. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.
1679. Exclusion Bill; Whig and Tory parties began.	1681. Dryden's Absalom and Ahitophel.
1683. Ryehouse Plot.	
1685. James II. succeeded; Sedgemoor; Bloody Assizes.	
1687. Expulsion of Fellows of Magdalen.	1687. Hind and Panther; Montague and Prior's burlesque; Country Mouse and City Mouse; Newton's Principia.
1688. Declaration of Indulgence; Trial of seven Bishops; Landing of William of Orange.	
1689. William III. and Mary succeeded; the "Glorious Revolution"; Grand Alliance against France.	
1690. Battle of the Boyne.	1690. Locke on Human Understanding.
1694. Bank of England began.	
1697. Peace of Ryswick.	1697. Bentley's Epistles of Phalaris; Congreve's Mourning Bride; Dryden's Virgil.
1700. Philip Duke of Anjou and Charles of Austria disputed the Spanish crown; War of Spanish Succession (1701–1714).	1700. Dryden's Fables.
1701. "Act of Settlement."	1701. Steele's Christian Hero; Defoe's True Born Englishman.
1702. Anne succeeded; Ministry of Godolphin.	
1704. Tory ministers added; Blenheim.	1704. Campaign; Swift's Battle of Books and Tale of a Tub.
1706. Ramillies.	1706. Defoe's Apparition of Mrs. Veal.
1708. Dismissal of Tories; Whigs powerful.	1709. Pope's Pastorals; The Tatler.
1710. Prosecution of Sacheverell; Tory reaction; Whigs dismissed.	1711. Pope's Essay on Criticism; The Spectator.
1712. Rape of the Lock.	
1713. Peace of Utrecht.	1713. Cato.
1714. George I. succeeded; Whigs returned to office.	1714. Steele's The Crisis.
1715. Louis XV. of France succeeded; Jacobite rebellion in Scotland.	1715. Pope's Iliad.
	1719. Robinson Crusoe; Watts's Psalms and Hymns.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADDISON

(*Edinburgh Review*, July, 1843.)

The Life of Joseph Addison. By Lucy Aikin,[1] 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1843.

1. Some reviewers are of opinion that a lady who dares to publish a book renounces by that act the franchises appertaining to her sex, and can claim no exemption from the utmost rigour of critical procedure. From that opinion we dissent. We admit, indeed, that in a country which boasts of many female writers, eminently qualified by their talents and acquirements to influence the public mind, it would be of most pernicious consequence that inaccurate history or unsound philosophy should be suffered to pass uncensured, merely because the offender chanced to be a lady. But we conceive that, on such occasions, a critic would do well to imitate the courteous Knight[2] who found himself compelled by duty to keep the lists against Bradamante.[2] He, we are told, defended successfully the cause of which he was the champion ; but, before the fight began, exchanged Balisarda[2] for a less deadly sword, of which he carefully blunted the point and edge.

§§ 1–3. *Criticism of Miss Aikin's Life of Addison.*

[1] Lucy Aikin (1781–1864), daughter of Dr. John Aikin and sister of Mrs. Barbauld. Her best known works are *Memoirs of the Court of James I.*, *Memoirs of the Court of Charles I.*, and this *Life*. She has some fame also as a correspondent of Dr. Channing, the American preacher; and their letters have been published.

[2] See Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, XLV., 68. Bradamante, sister of Rinaldo, loves Ruggiero, the "courteous knight." In many adventures

2. Nor are the immunities of sex the only immunities which Miss Aikin may rightfully plead. Several of her works, and especially the very pleasing Memoirs of the Reign of James the First, have fully entitled her to the privileges enjoyed by good writers. One of those privileges we hold to be this, that such writers, when, either from the unlucky choice of a subject, or from the indolence too often produced by success, they happen to fail, shall not be subjected to the severe discipline which it is sometimes necessary to inflict upon dunces and impostors, but shall merely be reminded by a gentle touch, like that with which the Laputan flapper roused his dreaming lord, that it is high time to wake.[1]

3. Our readers will probably infer from what we have said that Miss Aikin's book has disappointed us. The truth is, that she is not well acquainted with her subject. No person who is not familiar with the political and literary history of England during the reigns of William the Third, of Anne, and of George the First, can possibly write a good life of Addison.[2] Now, we mean no reproach

in which she figures as a knight in armor with an enchanted sword, she shows the prowess of a warrior. In the adventure here referred to, her hand in marriage is to be the prize of the contest. Unknown to herself her own lover is her disguised antagonist. He purposely blunts the edge of his sword with a hammer, that he may not injure his liege lady. The duty alluded to was his promise to fight as the representative of another prince.

The champions of the romances of chivalry had names for their swords, as well as for their horses. Compare Arthur's sword Excalibur, Orlando's Durindana, Siegfried's Nothung.

[1] *Gulliver's Travels*, Part III., Ch. 2. "Those persons [in Laputa] who are able to afford it always keep a flapper in their family. The business of this officer is, gently to stroke the mouth of him who is to speak, and the right ear of him to whom the speaker addresses himself."

[2] Macaulay's *History of England from the Accession of James II.* was intended to cover this ground (1688–1727) but was broken off at the death of William III.

to Miss Aikin, and many will think that we pay her a compliment, when we say that her studies have taken a different direction. She is better acquainted with Shakspeare and Raleigh,[1] than with Congreve and Prior[2]; and is far more at home among the ruffs and peaked beards of Theobald's,[3] than among the Steenkirks and flowing periwigs[4] which surrounded Queen Anne's tea table[5] at Hampton. She seems to have written about the Elizabethan age, because she had read much about it; she seems, on the other hand, to have read a little about the age of Addison, because she had determined to write about it. The consequence is that she has had to describe men and things without having either a correct or a vivid idea of them, and that she has often fallen into errors of a very serious kind. The reputation which Miss Aikin has justly earned stands so high, and the charm of Addison's letters is so

[1] Sir Walter Raleigh (1552–1618), the famous English navigator and courtier of Queen Elizabeth.

[2] William Congreve (1672–1729), a writer of comedies which are distinguished for wit and for fine character-drawing, but which were, like other plays of the day, immoral and heartless. Matthew Prior (1664–1721), a poet, wit, and Tory politician. See Ward's *English Poets*.

[3] Ruffs, projecting muslin bands round the neck, worn in the sixteenth century. Theobald's, the seat of Lord Burleigh, Elizabeth's prime-minister.

[4] Or Steinkirk, a large cravat of fine lace, loosely knotted, with one end passed through the buttonhole. The cravat commemorates by its name the disordered and hasty dress of the young French nobles at the battle of Steenkerke (1692). Periwigs, or perukes, immense wigs covered with curls, worn from 1660 to 1725 by all gentlemen in full dress. A reminiscence of this fashion is still to be seen in the big wig of the English Lord Chancellor.

[5] Tea was first known in England about 1660; it became a fashionable beverage in Queen Anne's time. *Cf.* Pope's familiar couplet, "Imperial Anna, whom three realms obey; who sometimes counsel takes, and sometimes tea." Hampton Court, the palace built by Cardinal Wolsey, was a favorite residence of Queen Anne.

great, that a second edition of this work may probably be required. If so, we hope that every paragraph will be revised, and that every date and fact about which there can be the smallest doubt will be carefully verified.

4. To Addison himself we are bound by a sentiment as much like affection as any sentiment can be, which is inspired by one who has been sleeping a hundred and twenty years in Westminster Abbey. We trust, however, that this feeling will not betray us into that abject idolatry which we have often had occasion to reprehend in others, and which seldom fails to make both the idolater and the idol ridiculous. A man of genius and virtue is but a man. All his powers cannot be equally developed; nor can we expect from him perfect self-knowledge. We need not, therefore, hesitate to admit that Addison has left us some compositions which do not rise above mediocrity, some heroic poems hardly equal to Parnell's,[1] some criticism as superficial as Dr. Blair's,[2] and a tragedy not very much better than Dr. Johnson's.[3] It is praise enough to say of a writer that, in a high department of literature, in which many eminent writers have distinguished themselves, he has had no equal; and this may with strict justice be said of Addison.

5. As a man, he may not have deserved the adoration which he received from those who, bewitched by his fascinating society, and indebted for all the comforts of life

§§ 4–5. *A guarded estimate of Addison as a writer, and an enthusiastic judgment of his character as a man.*

[1] Thomas Parnell (1679–1717), an Irish poet, author of the *Hermit* and other poems.

[2] Hugh Blair (1718–1800), a Scotch preacher. He wrote a famous rhetoric, and became the leading authority on this subject in the eighteenth century. His critical faculty may be measured by the fact that he believed in the genuineness of Ossian's poems.

[3] Dr. Johnson wrote a tragedy called *Irene*.

to his generous and delicate friendship, worshipped him nightly, in his favourite temple at Button's.[1] But, after full inquiry and impartial reflection, we have long been convinced that he deserved as much love and esteem as can be justly claimed by any of our infirm and erring race. Some blemishes may undoubtedly be detected in his character; but the more carefully it is examined, the more will it appear, to use the phrase of the old anatomists, sound in the noble parts,[2] free from all taint of perfidy, of cowardice, of cruelty, of ingratitude, of envy. Men may easily be named, in whom some particular good disposition has been more conspicuous than in Addison. But the just harmony of qualities, the exact temper between the stern and the humane virtues, the habitual observance of every law, not only of moral rectitude, but of moral grace and dignity, distinguish him from all men who have been tried by equally strong temptations, and about whose conduct we possess equally full information.

6. His father was the Reverend Lancelot Addison, who, though eclipsed by his more celebrated son, made some figure in the world, and occupies with credit two folio pages in the Biographia Britannica.[3] Lancelot was sent up, as a poor scholar, from Westmoreland to Queen's College, Oxford, in the time of the Commonwealth,[4] made some progress in learning, became, like most of his fellow students, a violent Royalist, lampooned the heads of the

§§ 6. *Sketch of Addison's father* (1632–1703).

[1] Button's, a favorite coffee-house, established by a servant of Addison's.

[2] The heart, liver, lungs, and brain; the vital organs.

[3] *Biographia Britannica*, a book published in 1766, containing the lives of many distinguished Britons.

[4] 1649–1660. Oxford was held and fortified by the King during the Civil War, but was captured by Cromwell. The collegians were generally on the King's side, though Hampden, Pym, Eliot, and other great Puritans were Oxford men. After the war, Parliament sent a com-

University, and was forced to ask pardon on his bended knees. When he had left college, he earned a humble subsistence by reading the liturgy of the fallen Church [1] to the families of those sturdy squires whose manor [2] houses were scattered over the Wild of Sussex.[3] After the Restoration, his loyalty was rewarded with the post of chaplain to the garrison of Dunkirk.[4] When Dunkirk was sold to France, he lost his employment. But Tangier [5] had been ceded by Portugal to England as part of the marriage portion of the Infanta Catharine [6]; and to Tangier Lancelot Addison was sent. A more miserable situation can hardly be conceived. It was difficult to say whether the unfortunate settlers were more tormented by the heats or by the rains, by the soldiers within the wall or by the Moors [7] without it. One advantage the chaplain had. He enjoyed an excellent opportunity of studying the history and manners of Jews and Mahometans; and of this opportunity he appears to have made excellent use. On his return to England, after some

mission to reform the University. Cromwell himself was "Chancellor" for seven years (1651–1658).

[1] Cromwell suppressed Episcopal worship (1655), but zealous Episcopalians continued to worship in private.

[2] The manors of England were originally estates of landlords, each with a village of serfs or laborers upon it. On these manorial estates was the manor-house, the house of the baron, or, in modern English, the "squire."

[3] Wild (or "weald," an Anglo-Saxon word meaning forest) of Sussex, the northern part of the county.

[4] Dunkirk (Dunkerque), a city in Flanders, ceded to England in 1658, and bought back by the French in 1662.

[5] Tangier, the principal commercial city of Morocco. It had belonged to Portugal since 1471.

[6] Catherine of Braganza, who married Charles II. The daughter of a Spanish or Portuguese sovereign is called "Infanta."

[7] All the inhabitants of Morocco are inaccurately called Moors, although at present there are many Berbers, negroes, Arabs, as well as Jews and European natives among them.

years of banishment, he published an interesting volume on the Polity and Religion of Barbary, and another on the Hebrew Customs and the State of Rabbinical Learning. He rose to eminence in his profession, and became one of the royal chaplains, a Doctor of Divinity, Archdeacon of Salisbury, and Dean of Lichfield. It is said that he would have been made a bishop after the Revolution,[1] if he had not given offence to the government by strenuously opposing, in the Convocation[2] of 1689, the liberal policy of William and Tillotson.

7. In 1672, not long after Dr. Addison's return from Tangier, his son Joseph was born. Of Joseph's childhood we know little. He learned his rudiments at schools in his father's neighbourhood, and was then sent to the Charter House.[3] The anecdotes which are popularly related about his boyish tricks do not harmonize very well with what we know of his riper years. There remains a tradition that he was the ringleader in a barring out,[4] and another tradition that he ran away from school and hid himself in a wood, where he fed on berries and slept in a hollow tree, till after a long search he was discovered and brought home. If these stories be true, it would be curious to

§§ 7–9. *Addison's youth and education.*

[1] The flight of James II. and succession of William III. (1688).

[2] The assembly representing the clergy of the Church of England. It was called together by William III. in 1689 to consider a plan for admitting the Presbyterians and other Dissenters into the church. Tillotson (1630–1694), Archbishop of Canterbury, a great English preacher, was head of the Low-church party in this reign.

[3] One of the great public schools of England, originally founded as a Carthusian monastery in London in 1371. The school has gone to Surrey, but the buildings are to-day used for a charity-school in charge of the Merchant Taylors.

[4] Barricading the school-house against the masters when a school seeks redress of grievances. See a famous instance in Miss Edgeworth's *Parent's Assistant.*

know by what moral discipline so mutinous and enterprising a lad was transformed into the gentlest and most modest of men.

8. We have abundant proof that, whatever Joseph's pranks may have been, he pursued his studies vigorously and successfully. At fifteen he was not only fit for the university, but carried thither a classical taste and a stock of learning which would have done honour to a Master of Arts.[1] He was entered at Queen's College, Oxford ; but he had not been many months there, when some of his Latin verses fell by accident into the hands of Dr. Lancaster, Dean of Magdalene College.[2] The young scholar's diction and versification were already such as veteran professors might envy. Dr. Lancaster was desirous to serve a boy of such promise ; nor was an opportunity long wanting. The Revolution[3] had just taken place ; and nowhere had it been hailed with more delight than at Magdalene College. That great and opulent corporation had been treated by James, and by his Chancellor,[4] with an insolence and injustice which, even in such a Prince and in such a Minister, may justly excite amazement, and which had done more than even the prosecution of the Bishops to alienate the Church of England from the throne. A president, duly elected, had been violently expelled from his dwelling : a Papist[5] had been set over the society by a royal mandate : the Fellows who, in conformity with their oaths, had refused to

[1] The well-known academical degree, granted to one who had mastered the Liberal Arts in the mediæval universities; now it is given by colleges and universities at the conclusion of certain courses of higher study, or more carelessly as an honorary mark of general merit.

[2] Pronounced " Maudlin " The Oxford spelling is Magdalen. It is one of the most beautiful of the Oxford colleges.

[3] Of 1688.

[4] The notorious Jeffreys. For all this history, see Macaulay's *England*, vol. III., chap. VIII

[5] The current term of opprobrium for a Roman Catholic.

submit to this usurper, had been driven forth from their quiet cloisters and gardens, to die of want or to live on charity. But the day of redress and retribution speedily came. The intruders were ejected: the venerable House was again inhabited by its old inmates: learning flourished under the rule of the wise and virtuous Hough; and with learning was united a mild and liberal spirit too often wanting in the princely colleges of Oxford. In consequence of the troubles through which the society had passed, there had been no valid election of new members during the year 1688. In 1689, therefore, there was twice the ordinary number of vacancies; and thus Dr. Lancaster found it easy to procure for his young friend admittance to the advantages of a foundation then generally esteemed the wealthiest in Europe.

9. At Magdalene Addison resided during ten years. He was, at first, one of those scholars who are called Demies,[1] but was subsequently elected a fellow. His college is still proud of his name: his portrait still hangs in the hall; and strangers are still told that his favourite walk was under the elms which fringe the meadow on the banks of the Cherwell.[2] It is said, and is highly probable, that he was distinguished among his fellow students by the delicacy of his feelings, by the shyness of his manners, and by the assiduity with which he often prolonged his studies far into the night. It is certain that his reputation for ability and learning stood high. Many years later, the ancient Doctors of Magdalene continued to talk in their

[1] Demy, accented on the last syllable, a name of uncertain origin, given the scholars of Magdalen only Each college and school in England loves to have its own peculiar terminology for the usual academic functions. Thus, the heads of different colleges are called Master, President, and Warden in the same university.

[2] The pretty river on which the pleasure-boating and swimming of young Oxford is still done.

common room of his boyish compositions, and expressed their sorrow that no copy of exercises so remarkable had been preserved.

10. It is proper, however, to remark that Miss Aikin has committed the error, very pardonable in a lady, of overrating Addison's classical attainments. In one department of learning, indeed, his proficiency was such as it is hardly possible to overrate. His knowledge of the Latin poets, from Lucretius and Catullus down to Claudian and Prudentius,[1] was singularly exact and profound. He understood them thoroughly, entered into their spirit, and had the finest and most discriminating perception of all their peculiarities of style and melody ; nay, he copied their manner with admirable skill, and surpassed, we think, all their British imitators who had preceded him, Buchanan[2] and Milton alone excepted. This is high praise ; and beyond this we cannot with justice go. It is clear that Addison's serious attention, during his residence at the university, was almost entirely concentrated on Latin poetry, and that, if he did not wholly neglect other provinces of ancient literature, he vouchsafed to them only a cursory glance. He does not appear to have attained more than an ordinary acquaintance with the political and moral writers of Rome ; nor was his own Latin prose by any means equal to his Latin verse. His knowledge of Greek, though

§§ 10–16. *Miss Aikin has overestimated Addison's scholarship ; curious limitations of his reading.*

[1] T. Lucretius Carus (96–55 B.C.). He wrote a great poem (*On the Universe*) to set forth the principles of the Epicurean philosophy. C. Valerius Catullus (87–54 B.C.), a writer of beautiful lyric verses. These two are the earliest Latin poets of whose works any large amount remains (if we except the comedies of Plautus and Terence). They are about contemporary with Cæsar. Claudianus (circa 365 A.D.) and Prudentius (circa 400) represent the latest classical Latin poetry.

[2] George Buchanan, tutor of Mary Queen of Scots and James VI. He wrote Latin poems and a paraphrase of the Psalms.

doubtless such as was, in his time, thought respectable at Oxford, was evidently less than that which many lads now carry away every year from Eton and Rugby. A minute examination of his works, if we had time to make such an examination, would fully bear out these remarks. We will briefly advert to a few of the facts on which our judgment is grounded.

11. Great praise is due to the Notes which Addison appended to his version of the second and third books of the Metamorphoses.[1] Yet those notes, while they show him to have been, in his own domain, an accomplished scholar, show also how confined that domain was. They are rich in apposite references to Virgil,[2] Statius,[3] and Claudian; but they contain not a single illustration drawn from the Greek poets. Now, if, in the whole compass of Latin literature, there be a passage which stands in need of illustration drawn from the Greek poets, it is the story of Pentheus in the third book of the Metamorphoses. Ovid was indebted for that story to Euripides[4] and Theocritus,[5] both of whom he has sometimes followed minutely. But neither to Euripides nor to Theocritus does Addison make the faintest allusion; and we, therefore, believe that we do not wrong him by supposing that he had little or no knowledge of their works.

12. His travels in Italy, again, abound with classical

[1] The title of the principal work of the Roman poet, P. Ovidius Naso (43 B.C.–17 A.D.), a collection of all the stories of "transformations" in Greek mythology.

[2] P. Vergilius Maro (70–19 B.C.), author of the national Roman Epic, the *Æneid*, the *Georgics*, a didactic poem on farm-life, and the *Bucolics*, a set of short poems, imitations from the Greek "shepherd's poetry" or pastorals.

[3] Publius Statius (45–96 A.D.), author of the *Thebais*.

[4] Euripides, the third Athenian tragedian.

[5] Theocritus (270 B.C.), a writer of Greek pastorals.

quotations happily introduced; but scarcely one of those quotations is in prose. He draws more illustrations from Ausonius[1] and Manilius[2] than from Cicero. Even his notions of the political and military affairs of the Romans seem to be derived from poets and poetasters. Spots made memorable by events which have changed the destinies of the world, and which have been worthily recorded by great historians, bring to his mind only scraps of some ancient versifier. In the gorge of the Apennines he naturally remembers the hardships which Hannibal's army endured, and proceeds to cite, not the authentic narrative of Polybius,[3] not the picturesque narrative of Livy,[4] but the languid hexameters of Silius Italicus.[5] On the banks of the Rubicon[6] he never thinks of Plutarch's[7] lively description, or of the stern conciseness of the Commentaries,[8] or of those letters to Atticus[9] which so forcibly express the alternations of hope and fear in a sensitive mind at a great

[1] D. Magnus Ausonius (310–394 A.D.), a Latin Christian poet.

[2] M. Manilius (date uncertain), a writer of a Latin poem on astronomy.

[3] Polybius (204–125 B.C.), a celebrated Greek who was taken to Rome as a prisoner and there became interested in the Romans. He wrote a great history of Rome in forty books, five of which we have.

[4] Titus Livius (59 B.C.–17 A.D.) wrote a history of Rome in one hundred and forty-two books, thirty-five of which we have.

[5] Silius Italicus (25 A.D.) wrote an epic poem on the Punic war, still existing. His poetry is full of Italian geographical names.

[6] A river separating Italy proper from Cisalpine Gaul. Cæsar, whose province in Gaul ended at the Rubicon, broke the law by carrying his army across into Italy.

[7] Plutarch, (46 A.D.) a Greek historian, who wrote forty-six *Parallel Lives* of eminent Greeks and Romans. This refers to his story of Julius Cæsar's crossing the Rubicon in his *Life of Cæsar*.

[8] As a matter of fact, it is Cæsar's *Civil War* he ought to think of on the banks of the Rubicon, a much more interesting book than the *Commentaries*.

[9] Cicero's most intimate friend. A number of letters from Cicero to him are preserved.

crisis. His only authority for the events of the civil war is Lucan.[1]

13. All the best ancient works of art at Rome and Florence are Greek. Addison saw them, however, without recalling one single verse of Pindar,[2] of Callimachus,[3] or of the Attic dramatists ; but they brought to his recollection innumerable passages of Horace,[4] Juvenal,[5] Statius, and Ovid.

14. The same may be said of the Treatise on Medals.[6] In that pleasing work we find about three hundred passages extracted with great judgment from the Roman poets ; but we do not recollect a single passage taken from any Roman orator or historian ; and we are confident that not a line is quoted from any Greek writer. No person, who had derived all his information on the subject of medals from Addison, would suspect that the Greek coins were in historical interest equal, and in beauty of execution far superior to those of Rome.

15. If it were necessary to find any further proof that Addison's classical knowledge was confined within narrow limits, that proof would be furnished by his Essay on the Evidences of Christianity. The Roman poets throw little or no light on the literary and historical questions which he is under the necessity of examining in that Essay. He is,

[1] M. Annæus Lucanus (39–65 A.D.), author of a poem in ten books on the Civil War.

[2] Pindar, a great Theban poet (522 B.C.–443 B.C.).

[3] Callimachus (about 260 B.C.), a famous Alexandrian critic and poet.

[4] Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65–8 B.C.), the famous Roman lyric poet.

[5] D. Junius Juvenalis (60–140 A.D.), the great Roman satirist.

[6] A book by Addison. "Medal" was used in Addison's time to indicate ancient coins, especially in the precious metals. Now it means rather a coin struck to commemorate something, not to be used as money.

therefore, left completely in the dark; and it is melancholy to see how helplessly he gropes his way from blunder to blunder. He assigns, as grounds for his religious belief, stories as absurd as that of the Cock-Lane ghost,[1] and forgeries as rank as Ireland's Vortigern,[2] puts faith in the lie about the Thundering Legion,[3] is convinced that Tiberius[4] moved the senate to admit Jesus among the gods, and pronounces the letter of Agbarus King of Edessa[5] to be a record of great authority. Nor were these errors the effects of superstition; for to superstition Addison was by no means prone. The truth is that he was writing about what he did not understand.

16. Miss Aikin has discovered a letter, from which it appears that, while Addison resided at Oxford, he was one of several writers whom the booksellers engaged to make an English version of Herodotus;[6] and she infers that he must have been a good Greek scholar. We can allow very

[1] A famous ghost, a "luminous lady," accompanied by knockings and strange noises, who appeared in London in 1762. She was a fraud, but Dr. Johnson made her famous by investigating and believing.

[2] *Vortigern and Rowena*, a play written by William Henry Ireland, and published in his famous forged Shakespearian manuscripts. He actually wrote this whole play in "Shakespeare's autograph," and it was put on the stage in 1796 by Kemble.

[3] A Christian legion in the army of the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius. Its prayer for rain was answered by a thunder storm which destroyed numbers of the enemy. The legend is made to account for a name for a legion which was common enough in the Roman armies.

[4] Tiberius Claudius Nero (42 B.C.–37 A.D.), the Roman emperor under whom the Crucifixion occurred. Tertullian told this story in the second century, A.D.

[5] Eusebius, an early Christian father, relates that this king wrote a letter to Christ, asking him to come and heal him, and that Christ wrote an answer. Both letters are given by Eusebius.

[6] Herodotus (480–434 B.C.), the great Greek historian of the Persian wars.

little weight to this argument, when we consider that his fellow-labourers were to have been Boyle[1] and Blackmore.[2] Boyle is remembered chiefly as the nominal author of the worst book on Greek history and philology that ever was printed; and this book, bad as it is, Boyle was unable to produce without help. Of Blackmore's attainments in the ancient tongues, it may be sufficient to say that, in his prose, he has confounded an aphorism[3] with an apophthegm, and that when, in his verse, he treats of classical subjects, his habit is to regale his readers with four false quantities[4] to a page.

17. It is probable that the classical acquirements of Addison were of as much service to him as if they had been more extensive. The world generally gives its admiration, not to the man who does what nobody else even attempts to do, but to the man who does best what multitudes do well. Bentley[5] was so immeasurably superior to all the other scholars of his time that few among them could discover his superiority. But the accomplishment in which Addison excelled his contemporaries was then, as it is now,

§ 17–20. *His Latin Poetry.*

[1] Charles Boyle (1676–1731), afterwards Earl of Orrery. The book referred to is a publication on the controversy over the *Epistles* of Phalaris with the great Bentley. See Macaulay's *Essay on Sir William Temple*, and Swift's *Battle of the Books*.

[2] Sir Richard Blackmore (1650–1729), a physician and long-winded poet.

[3] An aphorism is a definition or short sentence expressing some important truth of a speculative sort. An apophthegm or apothegm is simply a proverb or maxim. The distinction is a very slight one.

[4] It is the special anxiety of English scholarship to distinguish accurately the long and short Latin vowels. Many good stories illustrate the English intolerance of a "false quantity."

[5] Richard Bentley (1662–1742), the greatest of English classical scholars and critics, master of Trinity College, Cambridge. See his life by Dr. Jebb, in the English Men of Letters Series.

highly valued and assiduously cultivated at all English seats of learning. Every body who had been at a public school[1] had written Latin verses; many had written such verses with tolerable success, and were quite able to appreciate, though by no means able to rival, the skill with which Addison imitated Virgil. His lines on the Barometer and the Bowling Green were applauded by hundreds, to whom the Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris[2] was as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics on an obelisk.

18. Purity of style, and an easy flow of numbers, are common to all Addison's Latin poems. Our favourite piece is the Battle of the Cranes and Pygmies; for in that piece we discern a gleam of the fancy and humour which many years later enlivened thousands of breakfast tables. Swift[3] boasted that he was never known to steal a hint; and he certainly owed as little to his predecessors as any modern writer. Yet we cannot help suspecting that he borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, one of the happiest touches in his Voyage to Lilliput from Addison's verses. Let our readers judge.

19. "The Emperor," says Gulliver, "is taller by about the breadth of my nail than any of his court, which alone is enough to strike an awe into the beholders."

[1] In England, certain great schools like Eton, Harrow, and Rugby are endowed for public instruction, but since Addison's time they have been in the hands of the wealthy and titled classes only. Then, as now, the pupils of these schools spent most of their time upon classical learning, which thus became a mark of social prestige in England. The old pupils of the public schools played the chief part in the English Church and State in Addison's day, as they now conduct the affairs of the British Empire.

[2] Bentley's great work, establishing the true date of the Greek book of letters, falsely attributed to Phalaris, Tyrant of Sicily, 550 B.C.

[3] Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), Addison's friend and rival. See Introduction.

20. About thirty years before Gulliver's Travels appeared, Addison wrote these lines :

> " Jamque acies inter medias sese arduus infert
> Pygmeadum ductor, qui, majestate verendus,
> Incessuque gravis, reliquos supereminet omnes
> Mole gigantea, mediamque exsurgit in ulnam." [1]

21. The Latin poems of Addison were greatly and justly admired both at Oxford and Cambridge, before his name had ever been heard by the wits who thronged the coffee-houses round Drury Lane theatre.[2] In his twenty-second year, he ventured to appear before the public as a writer of English verse. He addressed some complimentary lines to Dryden,[3] who, after many triumphs and many reverses, had at length reached a secure and lonely eminence among the literary men of that age. Dryden appears to have been much gratified by the young scholar's praise ; and an interchange of civilities and good offices followed. Addison was probably introduced by Dryden to Congreve,[4] and

§§ 21–26. *English poetry of that day. Addison's first attempts.*

[1] " And now between the battle lines advances the lofty leader of the Pygmies, who, terrible in his majesty and solemn in step, o'ertops all the rest with his gigantic mass, and rises aloft to the height of one's elbow."

[2] In Addison's time the principal theatre of London, situated in the fashionable quarter, where Russell Street now is. It had been rebuilt after the great fire by Sir Christopher Wren. In the next generation, Garrick was the manager.

[3] John Dryden (1631–1700), another of the great men of Trinity College, where Macaulay was educated. Dryden's great translation of Virgil was published in 1697, but parts had previously appeared in 1693 in a magazine. It was upon the excellence of this work that Addison complimented him in a little poem; Dryden in return printed Addison's discourse on the *Georgics* of Virgil, as a preface to his own translation, and introduced him to his own publisher, Tonson, who thereafter employed him.

[4] William Congreve, the great writer of comedy at this time. See page 92.

was certainly presented by Congreve to Charles Montague,[1] who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer,[2] and leader of the Whig party[3] in the House of Commons.

22. At this time Addison seemed inclined to devote himself to poetry. He published a translation of part of the fourth Georgic,[4] Lines to King William,[5] and other performances of equal value, that is to say, of no value at all. But in those days, the public was in the habit of receiving with applause pieces which would now have little chance of obtaining the Newdigate prize or the Seatonian prize.[6] And the reason is obvious. The heroic couplet[7] was then the favourite measure. The art of arranging words in that

[1] Charles Montague, first Earl of Halifax (1661–1715), an English statesman, financier, and poet, one of the most brilliant of the graduates of Trinity, Cambridge. See Introduction.

[2] A name applied to that department of the government of Great Britain which has charge of all matters relating to the revenue. The head of it is called the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He is necessarily a member of the House of Commons, which alone can lay taxes, but is a most important member of the so-called Cabinet, being in charge of the government finance. The person here alluded to is Montague. The word "exchequer" is an old Norman name, derived from the chequered cloth which covered the original table where the officers of the Norman kings transacted the financial business of the court.

[3] The origin of this party name is variously given. It was applied to the party of liberal principles in England from about the time of Charles II. to the Reform Bill of 1832.

[4] *Georgics*, Virgil's four books on the art of agriculture.

[5] Addison's friends, Somers and Montague, persuaded him to write, in 1695, this piece of civility to the king, who being a most unpoetic monarch, took no notice of it whatever.

[6] Sir Roger Newdigate founded an annual prize at Oxford University for the best English poem. The Seaton prize is given for the same purpose at Cambridge. The standard of prize poems is proverbially not high, though Tennyson, Newman, and Heber took such prizes.

[7] Heroic couplet, a pair of ten syllable iambic lines, like this:

> "Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
> Of woes unnumbered, heavenly goddess, sing!"

measure, so that the lines may flow smoothly, that the accents may fall correctly, that the rhymes may strike the ear strongly, and that there may be a pause at the end of every distich, is an art as mechanical as that of mending a kettle or shoeing a horse, and may be learned by any human being who has sense enough to learn any thing. But, like other mechanical arts, it was gradually improved by means of many experiments and many failures. It was reserved for Pope to discover the trick, to make himself complete master of it, and to teach it to every body else. From the time when his Pastorals[1] appeared, heroic versification became matter of rule and compass; and, before long, all artists were on a level. Hundreds of dunces who never blundered on one happy thought or expression were able to write reams of couplets which, as far as euphony was concerned, could not be distinguished from those of Pope himself, and which very clever writers of the reign of Charles the Second, Rochester,[2] for example, or Marvel,[3] or Oldham,[4] would have contemplated with admiring despair.

23. Ben Jonson[5] was a great man, Hoole[6] a very small

[1] The first published poem of Alexander Pope (1688–1744). It appeared in Tonson's *Miscellanies*, in 1709.

[2] John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647–1680), poet and courtier of Charles II., writer of witty verse. He is now best remembered for this epigram:

> "Here lies our sovereign lord the king,
> Whose word no man relies on;
> Who never said a foolish thing,
> And never did a wise one."

[3] Andrew Marvel or Marvell (1621–1678), Milton's friend and secretary, on the Parliamentary side. He wrote satires on Charles I. and an Horatian *Ode to Cromwell*.

[4] John Oldham (1653–1683), a writer of satires on the Jesuits. The writers of the Restoration affected wit and point rather than sentiment.

[5] Ben Jonson (1573–1637), Shakespeare's friend. He wrote chiefly plays, masques, and such entertainments.

[6] John Hoole (1727–1803), a rather mechanical maker of translations of Tasso, Ariosto, and other Italian poets.

man. But Hoole, coming after Pope, had learned how to manufacture decasyllable verses, and poured them forth by thousands and tens of thousands, all as well turned, as smooth, and as like each other as the blocks which have passed through Mr. Brunel's[1] mill in the dockyard at Portsmouth. Ben's heroic couplets resemble blocks rudely hewn out by an unpractised hand, with a blunt hatchet. Take as a specimen his translation of a celebrated passage in the Æneid :

> " This child our parent earth, stirr'd up with spite
> Of all the gods, brought forth, and, as some write,
> She was last sister of that giant race
> That sought to scale Jove's court, right swift of pace,
> And swifter far of wing, a monster vast
> And dreadful. Look, how many plumes are placed
> On her huge corpse, so many waking eyes
> Stick underneath, and, which may stranger rise
> In the report, as many tongues she wears." [2]

24. Compare with these jagged misshapen distichs the neat fabric which Hoole's machine produces in unlimited abundance. We take the first lines on which we open in his version of Tasso. They are neither better nor worse than the rest :

> " O thou, whoe'er thou art, whose steps are led,
> By choice or fate, these lonely shores to tread,
> No greater wonders east or west can boast
> Than yon small island on the pleasing coast.
> If e're thy sight would blissful scenes explore,
> The current pass, and seek the further shore."

25. Ever since the time of Pope there has been a glut of lines of this sort ; and we are now as little disposed to admire a man for being able to write them, as for being able to write

[1] Mark Isambard Brunel (1769–1849) made block-pulleys for ships in a mill at Portsmouth. He was a great engineer and mechanical genius.

[2] *Æneid*, Book IV., 178–183. The verses are from Jonson's *Poetaster*.

his name. But in the days of William the Third such versification was rare ; and a rhymer who had any skill in it passed for a great poet, just as in the dark ages a person who could write his name passed for a great clerk. Accordingly, Duke, Stepney, Granville, Walsh,[1] and others whose only title to fame was that they said in tolerable metre what might have been as well said in prose, or what was not worth saying at all, were honoured with marks of distinction which ought to be reserved for genius. With these Addison must have ranked, if he had not earned true and lasting glory by performances which very little resembled his juvenile poems.

26. Dryden was now busied with Virgil, and obtained from Addison a critical preface to the Georgics. In return for this service, and for other services of the same kind, the veteran poet, in the postscript to the translation of the Æneid, complimented his young friend with great liberality, and indeed with more liberality than sincerity. He affected to be afraid that his own performance would not sustain a comparison with the version of the fourth Georgic, by "the most ingenious Mr. Addison of Oxford." "After his bees," added Dryden, "my latter swarm is scarcely worth the hiving."

27. The time had now arrived when it was necessary for Addison to choose a calling. Every thing seemed to point his course towards the clerical profession. His habits were regular, his opinions orthodox. His college had large ecclesiastical preferment[2] in its gift, and boasts that it has given at least one bishop to almost every see[3] in England.

§§ 27–28. *Circumstances which determined Addison's career. Comparison of England in 1697 with France in 1830.*

[1] A group of minor poets of the times of Charles II. and James II.

[2] In England, a place or office in the Church.

[3] See, a form of the word "seat," came to mean usually the seat of a bishop; hence the office and authority of a bishop, a bishopric.

Dr. Lancelot Addison held an honourable place in the Church, and had set his heart on seeing his son a clergyman. It is clear, from some expressions in the young man's rhymes, that his intention was to take orders.[1] But Charles Montague interfered. Montague had first brought himself into notice by verses, well timed and not contemptibly written, but never, we think, rising above mediocrity. Fortunately for himself and for his country, he early quitted poetry, in which he could never have attained a rank as high as that of Dorset[2] or Rochester, and turned his mind to official and parliamentary business. It is written that the ingenious person who undertook to instruct Rasselas,[3] prince of Abyssinia, in the art of flying, ascended an eminence, waved his wings, sprang into the air, and instantly dropped into the lake. But it is added that the wings, which were unable to support him through the sky, bore him up effectually as soon as he was in the water. This is no bad type of the fate of Charles Montague, and of men like him. When he attempted to soar into the regions of poetical invention, he altogether failed ; but, as soon as he had descended from that ethereal elevation into a lower and grosser element, his talents instantly raised him above the mass. He became a distinguished financier, debater, courtier, and party leader. He still retained his fondness for the pursuits of his early days ; but he showed that fondness not by wearying the public with his own feeble performances, but by discovering and encouraging literary excellence in others. A crowd of wits and poets, who

[1] Orders, again, has an ecclesiastical use,—the rank and degree of clergyman, "holy orders."

[2] Charles Sackville (1637–1706), Earl of Dorset, man of letters and poet. See Ward's *English Poets*.

[3] Johnson's romantic tale, published in 1759, describing the life of an imaginary Prince Rasselas, brought up in a "Happy Valley" of Abyssinia, shut off from the evils of this world.

would easily have vanquished him as a competitor, revered him as a judge and a patron. In his plans for the encouragement of learning, he was cordially supported by the ablest and most virtuous of his colleagues, the Lord Chancellor Somers.[1] Though both these great statesmen had a sincere love of letters, it was not solely from a love of letters that they were desirous to enlist youth of high intellectual qualifications in the public service. The Revolution had altered the whole system of government. Before that event the press had been controlled by censors,[2] and the Parliament had sat only two months in eight years. Now the press was free, and had begun to exercise unprecedented influence on the public mind. Parliament met annually and sat long. The chief power in the State had passed to the House of Commons. At such a conjuncture, it was natural that literary and oratorical talents should rise in value. There was danger that a Government which neglected such talents might be subverted by them. It was, therefore, a profound and enlightened policy which led Montague and Somers to attach such talents to the Whig party, by the strongest ties both of interest and of gratitude.

28. It is remarkable that in a neighbouring country, we have recently seen similar effects follow from similar causes. The Revolution of July, 1830, established representative

[1] John, Baron Somers (1652–1716), the great English jurist and statesman of the reigns of James II., William and Mary, and Anne. See Introduction.

[2] All over Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, regulations were in force whereby manuscripts, printed books, plays, and other publications were examined by officials, who suppressed any part or the whole of any writings obnoxious to the government. See the references to the *Areopagitica* in Macaulay's *Essay on Milton*. This censorship was practically abolished in England in 1694 and in Germany in 1848 ; in Russia it still obtains. There has never been any censorship of the press in the United States.

government in France. The men of letters instantly rose to the highest importance in the state. At the present moment most of the persons whom we see at the head both of the Administration and of the Opposition have been Professors, Historians, Journalists, Poets.[1] The influence of the literary class in England, during the generation which followed the Revolution, was great, but by no means so great as it has lately been in France. For, in England, the aristocracy of intellect had to contend with a powerful and deeply rooted aristocracy of a very different kind. France has no Somersets[2] and Shrewsburies[3] to keep down her Addisons and Priors.

29. It was in the year 1699, when Addison had just completed his twenty-seventh year, that the course of his life was finally determined. Both the great chiefs of the Ministry were kindly disposed towards him. In political opinions he already was what he continued to be through life, a firm, though a moderate Whig. He had addressed the most polished and vigorous of his early English lines to Somers, and had dedicated to Montague a Latin poem,

§§ 29–34. *Addison's travels in France. His interview with Boileau. A discussion of modern Latin verse.*

[1] The revolution of 1830 was, so to speak, headed by newspaper men and writers; it was a revolution of the middle classes against the aristocracy. Some men of the literary type concerned in it were Thiers, Casimir Périer, Guizot, and Chateaubriand. It put upon the throne Louis Philippe as a sort of constitutional monarch. He was king of France at the date (1843) at which Macaulay was writing, but was driven out by the more democratic Revolution of 1848.

[2] Duke of Somerset, one of the great Tory nobles, who, however, assisted at the coronation of William and Mary.

[3] Charles Talbot (1660–1718), twelfth Earl and first and only Duke of Shrewsbury, one of the highest of the English nobles, who joined in the invitation of William to England. He held various offices of state under William and Anne, and in 1714, as Lord High Treasurer, secured the succession of the House of Hanover by proclaiming George I. King of England.

truly Virgilian, both in style and rhythm, on the peace of Ryswick.[1] The wish of the young poet's great friends was, it should seem, to employ him in the service of the crown abroad. But an intimate knowledge of the French language was a qualification indispensable to a diplomatist; and this qualification Addison had not acquired. It was, therefore, thought desirable that he should pass some time on the Continent in preparing himself for official employment. His own means were not such as would enable him to travel; but a pension of three hundred pounds a-year was procured for him by the interest of the Lord Chancellor.[2] It seems to have been apprehended that some difficulty might be started by the rulers of Magdalene College. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote in the strongest terms to Hough. The State—such was the purport of Montague's letter—could not, at that time, spare to the Church such a man as Addison. Too many high civil posts were already occupied by adventurers, who, destitute of every liberal art and sentiment, at once pillaged and disgraced the country which they pretended to serve. It had become necessary to recruit for the public service from a very different class, from that class of which Addison was the representative. The close of the Minister's letter was remarkable. "I am called," he said, "an enemy of the Church. But I will never do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."

30. This interference was successful; and, in the summer of 1699, Addison, made a rich man by his pension,

[1] Between Louis XIV. and the Allies, in 1697.

[2] In Great Britain the highest law officer of the Crown. The word originally meant one who stood at the chancel, or railing round the throne of an emperor, to keep order among the suitors and who cared for the sealing and signing of decrees. Out of this office developed the great officials of church and state called chancellors. The chancellor here referred to is of course Somers.

and still retaining his fellowship, quitted his beloved Oxford, and set out on his travels. He crossed from Dover to Calais, proceeded to Paris, and was received there with great kindness and politeness by a kinsman of his friend Montague, Charles Earl of Manchester, who had just been appointed Ambassador to the Court of France. The Countess, a Whig and a toast,[1] was probably as gracious as her lord; for Addison long retained an agreeable recollection of the impression which she at this time made on him, and, in some lively lines written on the glasses of the Kit Cat[2] Club, described the envy which her cheeks, glowing with the genuine bloom of England, had excited among the painted beauties of Versailles.

31. Lewis the Fourteenth[3] was at this time expiating the vices of his youth by a devotion which had no root in reason, and bore no fruit of charity. The servile literature of France had changed its character to suit the changed character of the prince. No book appeared that had not an air of sanctity. Racine,[4] who was just dead, had passed the close of his life in writing sacred dramas; and Dacier[5] was seeking for the Athanasian[6] mysteries in

[1] A person whose health is drunk (see *Tatler*, No. 24), especially a woman.

[2] The Kit Cat Club flourished from 1703 to 1733. Its meetings were held at the "Cat and Fiddle," an inn kept by Christopher Cat. The *Spectator* (No. 9) derives the name of the club from the mutton-pies, there called "kitcats." Steele, Addison, Oxford, and other clever people were members, including most of the chiefs of the Whig party. The corresponding Tory club was called the "October."

[3] For Louis XIV., see Introduction.

[4] Racine (1639–1699), the classic French poet. Among his most celebrated pieces are *Andromaque*, *Iphigénie*, *Phèdre* (from Greek subjects), and at this time of piety, two from the Bible, *Esther* and *Athalie*.

[5] Dacier (1651–1722), a French classical scholar, translator of Plato, Horace, Aristotle, etc.

[6] Saint Athanasius (296–373 A.D.) secured by his eloquence and zeal,

Plato. Addison described this state of things in a short but lively and graceful letter to Montague. Another letter, written about the same time to the Lord Chancellor, conveyed the strongest assurances of gratitude and attachment. "The only return I can make to your Lordship," said Addison, "will be to apply myself entirely to my business." With this view he quitted Paris and repaired to Blois, a place where it was supposed that the French language was spoken in its highest purity, and where not a single Englishman could be found. Here he passed some months pleasantly and profitably. Of his way of life at Blois, one of his associates, an Abbé[1] named Philippeaux, gave an account to Joseph Spence.[2] If this account is to be trusted, Addison studied much, mused much, talked little, had fits of absence, and either had no love affairs, or was too discreet to confide them to the Abbé. A man who, even when surrounded by fellow countrymen and fellow students, had always been remarkably shy and silent, was not likely to be loquacious in a foreign tongue, and among foreign companions. But it is clear from Addison's letters, some of which were long after published in the Guardian,[3] that, while he appeared to be absorbed in his own meditations, he was really observing French society with that keen and sly, yet not ill-natured side glance, which was peculiarly his own.

though often at the risk of his own life, the adoption of the Nicene creed, both at the General Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) and elsewhere. Hence his name is associated with all Trinitarian doctrine.

[1] This word was originally the French for Abbot, the head of a monastery; it then became a title for any person enjoying the revenues of a monastery, and finally was assumed by persons who had studied theology, practised celibacy, and wore a peculiar dress, but had not, strictly speaking, any formal connection with the church, figuring chiefly as private tutors in great houses.

[2] Joseph Spence (1699–1768) published a very interesting book of anecdotes of great writers. He was professor of poetry at Oxford.

[3] Nos. 101 and 104.

32. From Blois he returned to Paris; and, having now mastered the French language, found great pleasure in the society of French philosophers and poets. He gave an account, in a letter to Bishop Hough, of two highly interesting conversations, one with Malbranche,[1] the other with Boileau.[2] Malbranche expressed great partiality for the English, and extolled the genius of Newton, but shook his head when Hobbes[3] was mentioned, and was indeed so unjust as to call the author of the Leviathan a poor silly creature. Addison's modesty restrained him from fully relating, in his letter, the circumstances of his introduction to Boileau. Boileau, having survived the friends and rivals of his youth, old, deaf, and melancholy, lived in retirement, seldom went either to Court or to the Academy,[4] and was almost inaccessible to strangers. Of the English and of English literature he knew nothing. He had hardly heard the name of Dryden. Some of our countrymen, in the warmth of their patriotism, have asserted that this ignorance must have been affected. We own that we see no ground for such a supposition. English literature was to the French of the age of Lewis the Fourteenth what German literature was to our own grandfathers. Very few, we suspect, of the accomplished men who, sixty or

[1] A French metaphysician (1638–1715) teaching a philosophic pantheism, expressed in the most beautiful French style. His great work is *Recherche de la Vérité*.

[2] Nicolas Boileau (1636–1711), a famous French critic and poet. He wrote a series of satires and a book called *L'Art Poétique*, which was the foundation of the literary criticism in France of his day, and which exercised great influence on the English taste also.

[3] Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), an English philosopher, author of the *Leviathan*, which showed that the power of the state is absolute against the individual, as the leviathan swallows all other animals. It is a quaint name for a powerful book on social questions.

[4] The French Academy was founded in 1635 by Richelieu. It is a learned society, chiefly employed as the official guardian of the French language and literature.

seventy years ago, used to dine in Leicester Square with Sir Joshua,[1] or at Streatham with Mrs. Thrale,[2] had the slightest notion that Wieland[3] was one of the first wits and poets, and Lessing,[4] beyond all dispute, the first critic in Europe. Boileau knew just as little about the Paradise Lost, and about Absalom and Ahitophel[5]; but he had read Addison's Latin poems, and admired them greatly. They had given him, he said, quite a new notion of the state of learning and taste among the English. Johnson will have it that these praises were insincere. "Nothing," says he, "is better known of Boileau than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin; and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation." Now, nothing is better known of Boileau than that he was singularly sparing of compliments. We do not remember that either friendship or fear ever induced him to bestow praise on any composition which he did not approve. On literary questions, his caustic, disdainful, and self-confident spirit rebelled against that authority to which everything else in France bowed down. He had the spirit to tell Lewis the Fourteenth firmly and even rudely, that his Majesty knew nothing about poetry, and admired verses which were de-

[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792), the great English painter. He was the friend of Johnson, Burke, Garrick, and Goldsmith, who are here alluded to.

[2] Mrs. Thrale (1741–1821), an educated English lady, the friend of these same eminent men and particularly intimate with Johnson. See Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*.

[3] Wieland (1733–1813), a German poet and professor. His best known poem is called *Oberon*.

[4] Lessing (1729–1781), a German dramatist and critic. His great work was done in criticism of the drama; but his best known book, *Laocoon*, is a treatise on fine art. His plays, *Nathan der Weise*, *Emilia Galotti*, etc., are also famous.

[5] A great political satire of Dryden's.

testable. What was there in Addison's position that could induce the satirist, whose stern and fastidious temper had been the dread of two generations, to turn sycophant for the first and last time? Nor was Boileau's contempt of modern Latin either injudicious or peevish. He thought, indeed, that no poem of the first order would ever be written in a dead language. And did he think amiss? Has not the experience of centuries confirmed his opinion? Boileau also thought it probable that, in the best modern Latin, a writer of the Augustan age would have detected ludicrous improprieties. And who can think otherwise? What modern scholar can honestly declare that he sees the smallest impurity in the style of Livy? Yet is it not certain that, in the style of Livy, Pollio,[1] whose taste had been formed on the banks of the Tiber, detected the inelegant idiom of the Po? Has any modern scholar understood Latin better than Frederic the Great[2] understood French? Yet is it not notorious that Frederic the Great, after reading, speaking, writing French, and nothing but French, during more than half a century, after unlearning his mother tongue in order to learn French, after living familiarly during many years with French associates, could not, to the last, compose in French, without imminent risk of committing some mistake which would have moved a smile in the literary circles of Paris? Do we believe that

[1] C. Asinius Pollio (76 B.C.–6 A.D.), a Roman politician of the party of Cæsar and Antony, a friend of Virgil and Horace, and an important Latin author. He wrote a history of the Civil War. This remark of his about Livy's "Patavinity," *i.e.*, his use of a Latin such as they spoke in Patavium or Padua, where Livy was born, has interested modern scholars. He refers probably to Livy's romantic turn for strong and picturesque rather than accepted and elegant phrases, as one might mention a Scotch poetic flavor in an English author.

[2] Frederic the Second of Prussia (1712–1786). See Carlyle's *Life*, and Macaulay's *Essay on Frederick the Great*.

Erasmus[1] and Fracastorius[2] wrote Latin as well as Dr. Robertson[3] and Sir Walter Scott wrote English? And are there not in the Dissertation on India, the last of Dr. Robertson's works, in Waverley, in Marmion, Scotticisms at which a London apprentice would laugh? But does it follow, because we think thus, that we can find nothing to admire in the noble alcaics[4] of Gray,[5] or in the playful elegiacs[4] of Vincent Bourne?[6] Surely not. Nor was Boileau so ignorant or tasteless as to be incapable of appreciating good modern Latin. In the very letter to which Johnson alludes, Boileau says—"Ne croyez pas pourtant que je veuille par là blâmer les vers Latins que vous m'avez envoyés d'un de vos illustres académiciens. Je les ai trouvés fort beaux, et dignes de Vida[7] et de Sannazar,[8] mais non pas d'Horace et de Virgile."[9] Several

[1] Erasmus (1465–1536), the Dutch scholar. His great writings are the *Colloquies* and *Encomium Moriæ*.

[2] Fracastorius (1483–1553), a learned Italian.

[3] William Robertson (1721–1793), a Scotch historian. His greatest work is his well known *History of Charles V.*

[4] The measures invented by the Greek poet Alcæus are called Alcaics. Horace used them frequently. See Tennyson's poem on Milton. Elegiac verse is composed of couplets, containing one hexameter line and one pentameter line. It was much used by classic poets for love-songs and lamentations. See Coleridge for a model:

> "In the hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column;
> In the pentameter aye falling in melody back."

[5] Thomas Gray (1716–1771), scholar and professor of history at Cambridge. He refused to be made "poet laureate." His letters are very good reading, as well as his better known poetry.

[6] An English writer of Latin verse in the eighteenth century. He was a teacher in Westminster School, and chiefly remembered as the instructor of the poet Cowper.

[7] Vida (1480–1566), an Italian writer of Latin poetry.

[8] Sannazaro (1458–1530), an Italian of Spanish descent, father of the modern pastoral.

[9] "Do not think, however, that I would wish to criticise unfavorably

poems, in modern Latin, have been praised by Boileau quite as liberally as it was his habit to praise anything. He says, for example, of the Père Fraguier's[1] epigrams, that Catullus seems to have come to life again. But the best proof that Boileau did not feel the undiscerning contempt for modern Latin verses which has been imputed to him, is, that he wrote and published Latin verses in several metres. Indeed it happens, curiously enough, that the most severe censure ever pronounced by him on modern Latin is conveyed in Latin hexameters. We allude to the fragment which begins—

> "Quid numeris iterum me balbutire Latinis,
> Longe Alpes citra natum de patre Sicambro,
> Musa, Jubes?"[2]

33. For these reasons we feel assured that the praise which Boileau bestowed on the *Machinæ Gesticulantes*,[3] and the *Gerano-Pygmæomachia*,[4] was sincere. He certainly opened himself to Addison with a freedom which was a sure indication of esteem. Literature was the chief subject of conversation. The old man talked on his favourite theme much and well, indeed, as his young hearer thought, incomparably well. Boileau had undoubtedly some of the qualities of a great critic. He wanted imagination; but he had strong sense. His literary code was formed on narrow principles; but in applying it, he showed great judgment and penetration. In mere style, abstracted from the ideas of which style is the

the Latin verses you have sent me of one of your illustrious Academicians. I have found them very pretty, and worthy of Vida and Sannazaro, but not of Horace and Virgil."

[1] Fraguier (1666–1728), a French Jesuit.

[2] "Why do you ask me again, O Muse, to stammer in Latin measures, me the son of a Sigambrian father, born far beyond the Alps."

[3] "Puppet Shows."

[4] "The Battle of the Pygmies and Cranes."

garb, his taste was excellent. He was well acquainted with the great Greek writers ; and, though unable fully to appreciate their creative genius, admired the majestic simplicity of their manner, and had learned from them to despise bombast and tinsel. It is easy, we think, to discover, in the Spectator and the Guardian, traces of the influence, in part salutary and in part pernicious, which the mind of Boileau had on the mind of Addison.

34. While Addison was at Paris, an event took place which made that capital a disagreeable residence for an Englishman and a Whig. Charles, second of the name, King of Spain, died ; and bequeathed his dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, a younger son of the Dauphin. The King of France, in direct violation of his engagements both with Great Britain and with the States General,[1] accepted the bequest on behalf of his grandson. The house of Bourbon was at the summit of human grandeur. England had been outwitted, and found herself in a situation at once degrading and perilous. The people of France, not presaging the calamities by which they were destined to expiate the perfidy of their sovereign, went mad with pride and delight. Every man looked as if a great estate had just been left him. "The French conversation," said Addison, "begins to grow insupportable ; that which was before the vainest nation in the world is now worse than ever." Sick of the arrogant exultation of the Parisians, and probably foreseeing that the peace between France and England could not be of long duration, he set off for Italy.

35. In December, 1700,[2] he embarked at Marseilles.

§§ 35–41. *Addison's travels in Italy.*

[1] The representative assembly of the seven provinces of the Dutch Republic.

[2] It is strange that Addison should, in the first line of his travels, have misdated his departure from Marseilles by a whole year, and still

As he glided along the Ligurian[1] coast, he was delighted by the sight of myrtles and olive trees, which retained their verdure under the winter solstice. Soon, however, he encountered one of the black storms of the Mediterranean. The captain of the ship gave up all for lost, and confessed himself to a capuchin[2] who happened to be on board. The English heretic,[3] in the mean time, fortified himself against the terrors of death with devotions of a very different kind. How strong an impression this perilous voyage made on him, appears from the ode, "How are thy servants blest, O Lord!" which was long after published in the Spectator. After some days of discomfort and danger, Addison was glad to land at Savona, and to make his way, over mountains where no road had yet been hewn out by art, to the city of Genoa.

36. At Genoa, still ruled by her own Doge,[4] and by the nobles whose names were inscribed on her Book of Gold,[5] Addison made a short stay. He admired the narrow streets overhung by long lines of towering palaces, the walls rich with frescoes,[6] the gorgeous temple of the Annunciation, and the tapestries whereon were recorded the long glories of

more strange that this slip of the pen, which throws the whole narrative into inextricable confusion, should have been repeated in a succession of editions and never detected by Tickell or by Hurd. [*Macaulay's note.*]

[1] Liguria, the country south of the maritime Alps in the northwest corner of Italy. Modern Nice, Mentone, Genoa, and the Riviera in general represent the Ligurian coast.

[2] Capuchin, an order of monks, named from their peculiar cowl.

[3] Heretic, one who holds religious opinions contrary to the established belief. In Italy, all Protestants must be heretics.

[4] An Italian form of the word "duke;" the title of the chief magistrates of Genoa as well as of Venice. They were at first elected for life by the republic, afterwards for two years only.

[5] The list of the nobility, old and new, from whom the governors might be taken.

[6] Fresco, a painting on walls covered with plaster. The word is

the house of Doria.[1] Thence he hastened to Milan, where he contemplated the Gothic magnificence of the cathedral[2] with more wonder than pleasure. He passed Lake Benacus[3] while a gale was blowing, and saw the waves raging as they raged when Virgil looked upon them. At Venice, then the gayest spot in Europe, the traveller spent the Carnival,[4] the gayest season of the year, in the midst of masques,[5] dances, and serenades. Here he was at once diverted and provoked, by the absurd dramatic pieces which then disgraced the Italian stage. To one of those pieces, however, he was indebted for a valuable hint. He was present when a ridiculous play on the death of Cato[6] was performed. Cato, it seems, was in love with a daughter of Scipio. The lady had given her heart to Cæsar. The rejected lover determined to destroy himself. He appeared seated in his library, a dagger in his hand, a Plutarch and a Tasso before him; and, in this position, he pronounced a soliloquy before he struck the blow. We are surprised that so remarkable a circumstance as this should have escaped the notice of all Addison's biographers. There cannot, we conceive, be the smallest doubt that this scene, in spite of its absurdities and anachronisms,[7] struck the trav-

strictly applicable only to the process of painting in colors on wet plaster which dries with the color. But it is now used of all wall painting.

[1] Andrea Doria, the liberator of Genoa from French dominion in 1528, and founder of the republic, which lasted till this century.

[2] Addison's opinion of the cathedral is perfectly just.

[3] The Lago di Garda.

[4] Carnival, the season of rejoicing before Lent begins, observed in Catholic countries.

[5] Any festive entertainment where the performers wore masks. See

[6] Marcus Porcius Cato, the patriotic opponent of Cæsar, who committed suicide when he heard of Cæsar's victory at Thapsus. The death of this hero was also the subject of Addison's drama.

[7] *I.e.*, with regard to Plutarch and Tasso.

eller's imagination, and suggested to him the thought of bringing Cato on the English stage. It is well known that about this time he began his tragedy, and that he finished the first four acts before he returned to England.

37. On his way from Venice to Rome, he was drawn some miles out of the beaten road, by a wish to see the smallest independent state in Europe. On a rock where the snow still lay, though the Italian spring was now far advanced, was perched the little fortress of San Marino.[1] The roads which led to the secluded town were so bad that few travellers had ever visited it, and none had ever published an account of it. Addison could not suppress a good-natured smile at the simple manners and institutions of this singular community. But he observed, with the exultation of a Whig, that the rude mountain tract which formed the territory of the republic swarmed with an honest, healthy, and contented peasantry, while the rich plain which surrounded the metropolis of civil and spiritual tyranny[2] was scarcely less desolate than the uncleared wilds of America.

38. At Rome Addison remained on his first visit only long enough to catch a glimpse of St. Peter's[3] and of the Pantheon.[4] His haste is the more extraordinary because the Holy Week[5] was close at hand. He has given no hint which can enable us to pronounce why he chose to fly from

[1] A republic, now fifteen hundred years old, of thirty-two square miles, with a population of six thousand.

[2] Rome.

[3] St. Peter's, the cathedral church of the Roman see. Built according to Michael Angelo's designs in the sixteenth century and dedicated in 1626.

[4] Pantheon, a building at Rome constructed by Agrippa in 27 B.C. in honor of the Julian family. It is now a Christian church. The interior is lighted entirely by a circular opening in the roof, and the walls are encrusted with marble.

[5] The week before Easter.

a spectacle which every year allures from distant regions persons of far less taste and sensibility than his. Possibly, travelling, as he did, at the charge of a Government distinguished by its enmity to the Church of Rome, he may have thought that it would be imprudent in him to assist at the most magnificent rite[1] of that Church. Many eyes would be upon him ; and he might find it difficult to behave in such a manner as to give offence neither to his patrons in England, nor to those among whom he resided. Whatever his motives may have been, he turned his back on the most august and affecting ceremony which is known among men, and posted[2] along the Appian[3] way to Naples.

39. Naples was then destitute of what are now, perhaps, its chief attractions. The lovely bay and the awful mountain were indeed there. But a farmhouse stood on the theatre of Herculaneum,[4] and rows of vines grew over the streets of Pompeii.[5] The temples of Pæstum[6] had not indeed been hidden from the eye of man by any great convulsion of nature ; but, strange to say, their existence was a secret even to artists and antiquaries. Though situated within a few hours' journey of a great capital, where Sal-

[1] This refers to the Easter masses at St. Peter's.

[2] *I.e.*, travelled by post-horses.

[3] The Roman road, running from Rome to Brundisium, begun and named by Appius Claudius (312 B.C.). Near Rome it is lined with tombs and other memorials of antiquity.

[4] Herculaneum, an ancient city of Campania, south of Naples, directly at the foot of Vesuvius. It was entirely covered by the eruption of 79 A.D. with lava and ashes ; it was rediscovered in 1709, by a farmer sinking a well.

[5] Pompeii, a much larger town, was first found in 1748. Excavations were, however, never regularly or properly conducted till this century.

[6] Pæstum, an ancient city of Lucania, south of Naples. It was not known to modern scholars till 1745.

vator[1] had not long before painted, and where Vico[2] was then lecturing, those noble remains were as little known to Europe as the ruined cities overgrown by the forests of Yucatan.[3] What was to be seen at Naples, Addison saw. He climbed Vesuvius, explored the tunnel of Posilipo,[4] and wandered among the vines and almond trees of Capreæ.[5] But neither the wonders of nature, nor those of art, could so occupy his attention as to prevent him from noticing, though cursorily, the abuses of the government and the misery of the people. The great kingdom which had just descended to Philip the Fifth,[6] was in a state of paralytic dotage. Even Castile and Aragon were sunk in wretchedness. Yet, compared with the Italian dependencies of the Spanish crown, Castile and Aragon might be called prosperous. It is clear that all the observations which Addison made in Italy tended to confirm him in the political opinions which he had adopted at home. To the last, he always spoke of foreign travel as the best cure for Jacobitism.[7] In his Freeholder,[8] the Tory fox-hunter asks what travelling is good for, except to teach a man to jabber French, and to talk against passive obedience.

40. From Naples, Addison returned to Rome by sea, along the coast which his favourite Virgil had celebrated.

[1] Salvator Rosa (1615–1673), a painter of Naples, fond of picturesque and romantic subjects.

[2] Vico (1668–1744), an Italian jurist and professor at Naples.

[3] Yucatan was once the home of the Mayas, a race who reached a high state of civilization, and left cities full of interesting architecture not yet thoroughly explored or understood.

[4] Posilipo, a famous cave near Naples.

[5] Capreæ, or Capri, a beautiful island in the bay of Naples.

[6] See Macaulay's essay on the *War of the Succession*.

[7] Support of the Stuart family, whose heir was James III.

[8] See § 130.

The felucca[1] passed the headland where the oar and trumpet were placed by the Trojan adventurers on the tomb of Misenus,[2] and anchored at night under the shelter of the fabled promontory of Circe.[3] The voyage ended in the Tiber, still overhung with dark verdure, and still turbid with yellow sand, as when it met the eyes of Æneas. From the ruined port of Ostia, the stranger hurried to Rome; and at Rome he remained during those hot and sickly months when, even in the Augustan age, all who could make their escape fled from mad dogs and from streets black with funerals, to gather the first figs of the season in the country.[4] It is probable that, when he, long after, poured forth in verse his gratitude to the Providence which had enabled him to breathe unhurt in tainted air, he was thinking of the August and September which he passed at Rome.

41. It was not till the latter end of October that he tore himself away from the masterpieces of ancient and modern art which are collected in the city so long the mistress of the world. He then journeyed northward, passed through Sienna, and for a moment forgot his prejudices in favour of classic architecture as he looked on the magnificent cathedral. At Florence he spent some days with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who, cloyed with the pleasures of ambition, and impatient of its pains, fearing both parties, and loving neither, had determined to hide in an Italian retreat talents and accomplishments which, if they had been united with fixed principles and civil courage, might have

[1] A long, narrow vessel with two masts, rigged with lateen sails, and capable also of being rowed, used in the Mediterranean.

[2] See Virgil's *Æneid*, book VI., 234. Æneas's trumpeter was buried on the headland of Misenum.

[3] Circe, the goddess whose potions transformed wayfarers into beasts. See *Odyssey*, X., and *Æneid*, VII., 1-24.

[4] This is a description by Juvenal of summer in Rome.

made him the foremost man of his age. These days, we are told, passed pleasantly ; and we can easily believe it. For Addison was a delightful companion when he was at his ease ; and the Duke, though he seldom forgot that he was a Talbot, had the invaluable art of putting at ease all who came near him.

42. Addison gave some time to Florence,[1] and especially to the sculptures in the Museum, which he preferred even to those of the Vatican. He then pursued his journey through a country in which the ravages of the last war were still discernible, and in which all men were looking forward with dread to a still fiercer conflict. Eugene[2] had already descended from the Rhætian Alps, to dispute with Catinat the rich plain of Lombardy. The faithless ruler of Savoy[3] was still reckoned among the allies of Lewis. England had not yet actually declared war against France : but Manchester had left Paris ; and the negotiations which produced the Grand Alliance[4] against the House of Bourbon were in progress. Under such circumstances, it was desirable for an English traveller to reach neutral ground without delay. Addison resolved to cross Mont Cenis.[5] It was December ; and the road was very different from that which now reminds the stranger of the power and genius of Napoleon. The winter, however, was mild ; and

§§ 42-46. *Crosses the Alps. Change of ministry in England. Loss of pension.*

[1] The most beautiful town in North Italy. The sculptures in the Uffizzi Museum include the Venus de Medici, the Wrestlers, and a large number of portrait statues of Romans.

[2] See Introduction.

[3] Victor Amadeus II. (1666–1732), first king of Sardinia. See Introduction.

[4] The alliance against Louis XIV. of England, Holland, Austria, and other powers.

[5] Mont Cenis, now penetrated by the long railway tunnel leading to France and crossed by the splendid military road of Napoleon.

the passage was, for those times, easy. To this journey Addison alluded when, in the ode which we have already quoted, he said that for him the Divine goodness had warmed the hoary Alpine hills.[1]

43. It was in the midst of the eternal snow that he composed his Epistle to his friend Montague, now Lord Halifax. That Epistle, once widely renowned, is now known only to curious readers, and will hardly be considered by those to whom it is known as in any perceptible degree heightening Addison's fame. It is, however, decidedly superior to any English composition which he had previously published. Nay, we think it quite as good as any poem in heroic metre which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the publication of the Essay on Criticism.[2] It contains passages as good as the second-rate passages of Pope, and would have added to the reputation of Parnell[3] or Prior.[4]

44. But, whatever be the literary merits or defects of the Epistle, it undoubtedly does honour to the principles and spirit of the author. Halifax had now nothing to give. He had fallen from power, had been held up to obloquy, had been impeached by the House of Commons, and, though his Peers had dismissed the impeachment, had, as it seemed, little chance of ever again filling high office. The Epistle, written at such a time, is one among many proofs that there was no mixture of cowardice or meanness in the suavity and moderation which distinguished Addison from all the other public men of those stormy times.

[1] See above, § 35.

[2] Pope's famous poem appeared in 1711.

[3] Thomas Parnell (1679–1711), an Irish poet.

[4] Matthew Prior (1664–1721), like Addison a poet and a diplomatist, but of the opposite party. He was a friend of Montague, with whom he wrote the poem called *The Country Mouse and City Mouse.*

45. At Geneva, the traveller learned that a partial change of ministry had taken place in England, and that the Earl of Manchester had become Secretary of State.[1] Manchester exerted himself to serve his young friend. It was thought advisable that an English agent should be near the person of Eugene in Italy ; and Addison, whose diplomatic education was now finished, was the man selected. He was preparing to enter on his honourable functions, when all his prospects were for a time darkened by the death of William the Third.[2]

46. Anne[3] had long felt a strong aversion, personal, political, and religious, to the Whig party. That aversion appeared in the first measures of her reign. Manchester was deprived of the seals, after he had held them only a few weeks. Neither Somers nor Halifax was sworn of the Privy Council.[4] Addison shared the fate of his three patrons. His hopes of employment in the public service were at an end ; his pension was stopped ; and it was necessary for him to support himself by his own exertions. He became tutor to a young English traveller,[5] and appears to have rambled with his pupil over great part of Switzerland and Germany. At this time he wrote his pleasing treatise on Medals. It was not published till after his death ; but

[1] One of the officers of state who manage the departments of the government. There are now five: the home, foreign, colonial, war, and Indian secretaries. Manchester had been ambassador. See § 30

[2] In 1702.

[3] See Introduction.

[4] The body of advisers of the English sovereign has borne this name since the fifteenth century. The cabinet of modern days is simply a little committee of this privy council, though it has now become the governing body of England, responsible to Parliament only.

[5] There was a rather interesting correspondence between Addison and the Duke of Somerset, who wished to employ him as tutor to his son, Lord Hertford. But where he was, and what pupils he had in this period, is uncertain.

several distinguished scholars saw the manuscript, and gave just praise to the grace of the style, and to the learning and ingenuity evinced by the quotations.

47. From Germany Addison repaired to Holland, where he learned the melancholy news of his father's death. After passing some months in the United Provinces,[1] he returned about the close of the year 1703 to England. He was there cordially received by his friends, and introduced by them into the Kit Cat Club, a society in which were collected all the various talents and accomplishments which then gave lustre to the Whig party.

48. Addison was, during some months after his return from the Continent, hard pressed by pecuniary difficulties. But it was soon in the power of his noble patrons to serve him effectually. A political change, silent and gradual, but of the highest importance, was in daily progress. The accession of Anne had been hailed by the Tories with transports of joy and hope; and for a time it seemed that the Whigs had fallen never to rise again. The throne was surrounded by men supposed to be attached to the prerogative[2] and to the Church; and among these none stood so high in the favour of the sovereign as the Lord Treasurer Godolphin[3] and the Captain General Marlborough.

49. The country gentlemen and country clergymen had fully expected that the policy of these ministers would be directly opposed to that which had been almost constantly followed by William; that the landed interest[4] would be

§§ 47–60. *Return to England. Blenheim. The Campaign. Travels in Italy, and Rosamund.*

[1] The seven provinces of the Low Country, now the Kingdom of Holland, formed a league in 1579, which became the Dutch Republic.

[2] Prerogative, privileges belonging to the sovereign, subject to no interference from law.

[3] For Godolphin, see Introduction.

[4] That is, owners of land, landlords.

favoured at the expense of trade ; that no addition would be made to the funded debt,[1] that the privileges conceded to Dissenters[2] by the late King would be curtailed, if not withdrawn ; that the war with France, if there must be such a war, would, on our part, be almost entirely naval ; and that the Government would avoid close connections with foreign powers, and, above all, with Holland.

50. But the country gentlemen and country clergymen were fated to be deceived, not for the last time. The prejudices and passions which raged without control in vicarages, in cathedral closes, and in the manor-houses of foxhunting squires, were not shared by the chiefs of the ministry. Those statesmen saw that it was both for the public interest, and for their own interest, to adopt a Whig policy, at least as respected the alliances of the country and the conduct of the war. But, if the foreign policy of the Whigs were adopted, it was impossible to abstain from adopting also their financial policy. The natural consequences followed. The rigid Tories were alienated from the Government. The votes of the Whigs became necessary to it. The votes of the Whigs could be secured only by further concessions ; and further concessions the Queen was induced to make.

51. At the beginning of the year 1704, the state of parties bore a close analogy to the state of parties in 1826. In 1826, as in 1704, there was a Tory ministry divided into two hostile sections. The position of Mr. Canning[3] and

[1] The national or public debt, created by Montague.

[2] Dissenters, those who disagree with the Church of England about the church-government and ritual, and do not attend the services of the established church.

[3] George Canning (1770–1827), a celebrated English statesman of the Tory party, who acted with the more liberal section of that party in the early part of this century, especially in the foreign relations of England.

his friends in 1826 corresponded to that which Marlborough and Godolphin occupied in 1704. Nottingham[1] and Jersey,[1] were, in 1704, what Lord Eldon[2] and Lord Westmoreland were in 1826. The Whigs of 1704 were in a situation resembling that in which the Whigs of 1826 stood. In 1704, Somers, Halifax, Sunderland, Cowper,[3] were not in office. There was no avowed coalition between them and the moderate Tories. It is probable that no direct communication tending to such a coalition had yet taken place; yet all men saw that such a coalition was inevitable, nay, that it was already half formed. Such, or nearly such, was the state of things when tidings arrived of the great battle fought at Blenheim on the 13th August, 1704. By the Whigs the news was hailed with transports of joy and pride. No fault, no cause of quarrel, could be remembered by them against the Commander whose genius had, in one day, changed the face of Europe, saved the Imperial throne,[4] humbled the House of Bourbon, and secured the Act of Settlement[5] against foreign hostility. The feeling of the Tories was very different. They could not indeed, without imprudence, openly express regret at an event so glorious to their country; but their congratulations were so cold and sullen as to give deep disgust to the victorious general and his friends.

52. Godolphin was not a reading man. Whatever time he could spare from business he was in the habit of spending at Newmarket[6] or at the card table. But he was not

[1] Thomas Finch, Earl of Nottingham (1647–1730), though a Tory, acted with the Whigs during the Revolution of 1688. Villiers, Earl of Jersey (1656–1711), did the same.

[2] Eldon (1751–1838), the great lord chancellor.

[3] For Halifax, etc., see Introduction.

[4] That of the Holy Roman Empire.

[5] The Act of Parliament settling the Crown of England on the House of Hanover.

[6] A fashionable racecourse.

absolutely indifferent to poetry; and he was too intelligent an observer not to perceive that literature was a formidable engine of political warfare, and that the great Whig leaders had strengthened their party, and raised their character, by extending a liberal and judicious patronage to good writers. He was mortified, and not without reason, by the exceeding badness of the poems which appeared in honour of the battle of Blenheim. One of these poems has been rescued from oblivion by the exquisite absurdity of three lines.

> "Think of two thousand gentlemen at least,
> And each man mounted on his capering beast;
> Into the Danube they were pushed by shoals."

53. Where to procure better verses the Treasurer did not know. He understood how to negotiate a loan, or remit a subsidy: he was also well versed in the history of running horses and fighting cocks; but his acquaintance among the poets was very small. He consulted Halifax; but Halifax affected to decline the office of adviser. He had, he said, done his best, when he had power, to encourage men whose abilities and acquirements might do honour to their country. Those times were over. Other maxims had prevailed. Merit was suffered to pine in obscurity; and the public money was squandered on the undeserving. "I do know," he added, "a gentleman who would celebrate the battle in a manner worthy of the subject: but I will not name him." Godolphin, who was expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath, and who was under the necessity of paying court to the Whigs, gently replied that there was too much ground for Halifax's complaints, but that what was amiss should in time be rectified, and that in the mean time the services of a man such as Halifax had described should be liberally rewarded. Halifax then mentioned Addison, but, mindful of the dignity as well as of the pecuniary interest of his friend, insisted that the Minister should apply in

the most courteous manner to Addison himself; and this Godolphin promised to do.

54. Addison then occupied a garret up three pair of stairs, over a small shop in the Haymarket.[1] In this humble lodging he was surprised, on the morning which followed the conversation between Godolphin and Halifax, by a visit from no less a person than the Right Honourable Henry Boyle, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards Lord Carleton.[2] This highborn minister had been sent by the Lord Treasurer as ambassador to the needy poet. Addison readily undertook the proposed task, a task which, to so good a Whig, was probably a pleasure. When the poem was little more than half finished, he showed it to Godolphin, who was delighted with it, and particularly with the famous similitude of the Angel. Addison was instantly appointed to a Commissionership[3] worth about two hundred pounds a year, and was assured that this appointment was only an earnest of greater favours.

55. The Campaign came forth, and was as much admired by the public as by the Minister. It pleases us less on the whole than the Epistle to Halifax. Yet it undoubtedly ranks high among the poems which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the dawn of Pope's genius. The chief merit of the Campaign, we think, is that which was noticed by Johnson, the manly and rational rejection of fiction. The first great poet whose works have come down to us sang of war long before war became a science or a trade. If, in his time, there was enmity between two little Greek towns, each poured forth its crowd of citizens, ignorant of discipline, and armed with

[1] A market once stood on the land where now is Regent Street and the Criterion Theatre.

[2] Secretary of State under Anne.

[3] He was made commissioner of appeals in the excise, and shortly after an under-secretary of State.

implements of labour rudely turned into weapons. On each side appeared conspicuous a few chiefs, whose wealth had enabled them to procure good armour, horses, and chariots, and whose leisure had enabled them to practise military exercises. One such chief, if he were a man of great strength, agility, and courage, would probably be more formidable than twenty common men ; and the force and dexterity with which he flung his spear might have no inconsiderable share in deciding the event of the day. Such were probably the battles with which Homer was familiar. But Homer related the actions of men of a former generation, of men who sprang from the Gods, and communed with the Gods face to face, of men, one of whom could with ease hurl rocks which two sturdy hinds of a later period would be unable even to lift. He therefore naturally represented their martial exploits as resembling in kind, but far surpassing in magnitude, those of the stoutest and most expert combatants of his own age. Achilles, clad in celestial armour, drawn by celestial coursers, grasping the spear which none but himself could raise, driving all Troy and Lycia[1] before him, and choking Scamander[2] with dead, was only a magnificent exaggeration of the real hero, who, strong, fearless, accustomed to the use of weapons, guarded by a shield and helmet of the best Sidonian[3] fabric, and whirled along by horses of Thessalian[4] breed, struck down with his own right arm foe after foe. In all rude societies similar notions are found.

[1] The Lycians were inhabitants of southern Asia Minor and allies of the Trojans.

[2] One of the rivers which flowed across the plains about Troy. The story alluded to is in the *Iliad*, Book XXI.

[3] Sidonia, the capital of Phœnicia, thirteen centuries before Christ, was famous for its commerce and manufactures, especially of rich cloths, splendid colors, and beautiful embroidery.

[4] The plains of Thessaly were famous for their horses even in historic times.

There are at this day countries where the Lifeguardsman Shaw[1] would be considered as a much greater warrior than the Duke of Wellington. Buonaparte loved to describe the astonishment with which the Mamelukes[2] looked at his diminutive figure. Mourad Bey, distinguished above all his fellows by his bodily strength, and by the skill with which he managed his horse and his sabre, could not believe that a man who was scarcely five feet high, and rode like a butcher, could be the greatest soldier in Europe.

56. Homer's descriptions of war had therefore as much truth as poetry requires. But truth was altogether wanting to the performances of those who, writing about battles which had scarcely anything in common with the battles of his times, servilely imitated his manner. The folly of Silius Italicus,[3] in particular, is positively nauseous. He undertook to record in verse the vicissitudes of a great struggle between generals of the first order: and his narrative is made up of the hideous wounds which these generals inflicted with their own hands. Asdrubal flings a spear which grazes the shoulder of the consul Nero; but Nero sends his spear into Asdrubal's side. Fabius slays Thuris and Butes and Maris and Arses, and the long-haired Adherbes, and the gigantic Thylis, and Sapharus and Monæsus, and the trumpeter Morinus. Hannibal runs Perusinus through the groin with a stake, and breaks the

[1] A tall private soldier and pugilist, renowned in story in the early part of this century. He killed ten French cuirassiers before he fell at Waterloo.

[2] A corps of cavalry, once belonging to the household guards of the Sultan in Egypt. They were massacred in a body by Mahomet Ali in 1811. Mourad Bey commanded them when Bonaparte in 1798 defeated the Mamelukes in the battle of the Pyramids.

[3] See § 12. The description here referred to is that of the battle of the Metaurus, fought between Hasdrubal and the Carthaginians, and the Roman Consuls, Livius and Nero, 207 B.C. The real fight had not the slightest resemblance to this tale.

backbone of Telesinus with a huge stone. This detestable fashion was copied in modern times, and continued to prevail down to the age of Addison. Several versifiers had described William turning thousands to flight by his single prowess, and dyeing the Boyne[1] with Irish blood. Nay, so estimable a writer as John Philips, the author of the Splendid Shilling,[2] represented Marlborough as having won the battle of Blenheim merely by strength of muscle and skill in fence. The following lines may serve as an example:

> "Churchill, viewing where
> The violence of Tallard most prevailed,
> Came to oppose his slaughtering arm. With speed
> Precipitate he rode, urging his way
> O'er hills of gasping heroes, and fallen steeds
> Rolling in death. Destruction, grim with blood,
> Attends his furious course. Around his head
> The glowing balls play innocent, while he
> With dire impetuous sway deals fatal blows
> Among the flying Gauls. In Gallic blood
> He dyes his reeking sword, and strews the ground
> With headless ranks. What can they do? Or how
> Withstand his wide-destroying sword?"

57. Addison, with excellent sense and taste, departed from this ridiculous fashion. He reserved his praise for the qualities which made Marlborough truly great, energy, sagacity, military science. But, above all, the poet extolled the firmness of that mind which, in the midst of confusion, uproar, and slaughter examined and disposed every thing with the serene wisdom of a higher intelligence.

58. Here it was that he introduced the famous compar-

[1] The battle of the Boyne in Ireland, July 12, 1690, in which William III. conquered James II.

[2] John Philips (1676–1708) wrote the *Splendid Shilling* and *Blenheim* as burlesques on *Paradise Lost*.

ison of Marlborough to an Angel guiding the whirlwind.[1] We will not dispute the general justice of Johnson's remarks on this passage.[2] But we must point out one circumstance which appears to have escaped all the critics. The extraordinary effect which this simile produced when it first appeared, and which to the following generation seemed inexplicable, is doubtless to be chiefly attributed to a line which most readers now regard as a feeble parenthesis,

"Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia pass'd."

Addison spoke, not of a storm, but of the storm. The great tempest of November, 1703, the only tempest which in our latitude has equalled the rage of a tropical hurricane, had left a dreadful recollection in the minds of all men. No other tempest was ever in this country the occasion of a parliamentary address or of a public fast. Whole fleets had been cast away. Large mansions had been blown down. One Prelate had been buried beneath the ruins of his Palace.[3] London and Bristol[4] had presented

[1] "'Twas then great Marlborough's mighty soul was proved,
That, in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
Examined all the dreadful scenes of war;
In peaceful thought the field of death surveyed,
To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle how to rage.
So when an angel by divine command
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia passed,
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
And pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm."

[2] In the *Tatler*, Steele had called this simile "one of the noblest thoughts that ever entered into the heart of man." Johnson, in his *Life of Addison*, finds the simile exceedingly commonplace.

[3] The Bishop of Bath and Wells. The story is told in Defoe's *Storm*.

[4] Bristol was at this time the second city in England.

the appearance of cities just sacked. Hundreds of families were still in mourning. The prostrate trunks of large trees, and the ruins of houses, still attested, in all the southern counties, the fury of the blast. The popularity which the simile of the angel enjoyed among Addison's contemporaries, has always seemed to us to be a remarkable instance of the advantage which, in rhetoric and poetry, the particular has over the general.

59. Soon after the Campaign, was published Addison's Narrative of his Travels in Italy. The first effect produced by this Narrative was disappointment. The crowd of readers who expected politics and scandal, speculations on the projects of Victor Amadeus, and anecdotes about the jollities of convents and the amours of cardinals and nuns, were confounded by finding that the writer's mind was much more occupied by the war between the Trojans and Rutulians[1] than by the war between France and Austria; and that he seemed to have heard no scandal of later date than the gallantries of the Empress Faustina.[2] In time, however, the judgment of the many was overruled by that of the few; and, before the book was reprinted, it was so eagerly sought that it sold for five times the original price. It is still read with pleasure: the style is pure and flowing; the classical quotations and allusions are numerous and happy; and we are now and then charmed by that singularly humane and delicate humour in which Addison excelled all men. Yet this agreeable work, even when considered merely as the history of a literary tour, may justly be censured on account of its faults of omission. We have already said that, though rich in extracts from the Latin poets, it contains scarcely any references to

[1] The name of the Italian people who resisted the landing of Æneas.

[2] Faustina, the name of two empresses of Rome, mother and daughter, wives of Antonius Pius and Marcus Aurelius respectively. They both were of evil character.

the Latin orators and historians. We must add that it contains little, or rather no information, respecting the history and literature of modern Italy. To the best of our remembrance, Addison does not mention Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Boiardo, Berni, Lorenzo de' Medici, or Machiavelli.[1] He coldly tells us, that at Ferrara he saw the tomb of Ariosto, and that at Venice he heard the gondoliers sing verses of Tasso.[2] But for Tasso and Ariosto he cared far less than for Valerius Flaccus and Sidonius Apollinaris.[3] The gentle flow of the Ticin[4] brings a line of Silius to his mind. The sulphurous steam of Albula suggests to him several passages of Martial.[5] But he has not a word to say of the illustrious dead of Santa Croce[6]; he crosses the wood of Ravenna without recollecting the Spectre Huntsman, and wanders up and down Rimini without one thought of Francesca.[7] At Paris, he had eagerly sought an introduction to Boileau; but he seems not to have been

[1] This catalogue of great Italians may be briefly summarized as follows: Dante (1265–1321), one of the greatest of the world's poets, author of the *Divine Comedy;* Petrarch (1304–1374), famous as the writer of sonnets to Laura, but hardly less famous as a classical scholar; Boccaccio (1313–1375), novelist, author of the *Decameron;* Boiardo (1434–1494), author of a great Italian poem, *Orlando in Love;* Berni (1498–1535), author of a famous burlesque on the same; Lorenzo (1449–1492), the Florentine statesman and man of letters; Machiavelli (1469–1527), another Florentine, author of famous treatises on politics and government, especially *The Prince*, whose hard-hearted maxims of statecraft have made his name a by-word.

[2] Ariosto, a great Italian poet (1474–1533), wrote *Orlando Furioso,* and many lyrics. Tasso, see page 103 of this essay.

[3] Valerius Flaccus (died 86 A.D.), wrote a long poem about the Argonauts. Apollinaris Sidonius (430 A.D.), Bishop of Clermont, left twenty-four poems and nine books of *Epistles.*

[4] Ticinus, a river of Italy flowing into the Po.

[5] "Albulæ aquæ," sulphur springs near Tibur, a few miles from Rome. Martial (43–104 A.D.), a famous writer of Latin epigrams.

[6] The church in Florence where is Dante's monument, and Michael Angelo, Galileo, and other great Florentines are buried.

[7] The Spectre Huntsman comes from a striking tale of Boccaccio's.

at all aware that at Florence he was in the vicinity of a poet with whom Boileau could not sustain a comparison, of the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Vincenzio Filicaja.[1] This is the more remarkable, because Filicaja was the favourite poet of the accomplished Somers, under whose protection Addison travelled, and to whom the account of the Travels is dedicated. The truth is, that Addison knew little, and cared less, about the literature of modern Italy. His favourite models were Latin. His favourite critics were French. Half the Tuscan[2] poetry that he had read seemed to him monstrous, and the other half tawdry.

60. His Travels were followed by the lively Opera of Rosamond. This piece was ill set to music, and therefore failed on the stage, but it completely succeeded in print, and is indeed excellent in its kind. The smoothness with which the verses glide, and the elasticity with which they bound, is, to our ears at least, very pleasing. We are inclined to think that if Addison had left heroic couplets to Pope, and blank verse to Rowe,[3] and had employed himself in writing airy and spirited songs, his reputation as a poet would have stood far higher than it now does. Some years after his death, Rosamond was set to new music by Doctor Arne[4]; and was performed with complete success. Several passages long retained their popularity, and were daily

Francesca is referred to in a beautiful passage in Dante (*Inferno*, V.), which should be read to the class.

[1] Filicaja (1642–1707), writer of odes and sonnets. It will be noticed how much interest Macaulay himself takes in Italian poetry, and how well he knows it.

[2] Here a general word for Italian.

[3] Nicholas Rowe (1673–1718), poet-laureate of England. Blank verse is unrhymed verse. The term is applied specially to a verse of five feet, commonly used in English drama and epic poetry.

[4] Michael Arne (1710–1778), the English composer of *Rule Britannia*, other songs still popular, and a few operas.

sung, during the latter part of George the Second's reign, at all the harpsichords[1] in England.

61. While Addison thus amused himself, his prospects, and the prospects of his party, were constantly becoming brighter and brighter. In the spring of 1705, the ministers were freed from the restraint imposed by a House of Commons, in which Tories of the most perverse class had the ascendency. The elections were favourable to the Whigs. The coalition which had been tacitly and gradually formed was now openly avowed. The Great Seal[2] was given to Cowper. Somers and Halifax were sworn of the Council. Halifax was sent in the following year to carry the decorations of the order of the garter to the Electoral Prince of Hanover,[3] and was accompanied on this honourable mission by Addison, who had just been made Undersecretary of State. The Secretary of State under whom Addison first served was Sir Charles Hedges, a Tory. But Hedges was soon dismissed to make room for the most vehement of Whigs, Charles, Earl of Sunderland.[4] In every department of the state, indeed, the High Churchmen[5] were compelled to give place to their opponents. At the close of 1707, the Tories who still remained in office strove to rally, with Harley[6] at their head. But the attempt, though favoured

§§ 61–66. *Addison's employments and personal qualities.*

[1] A stringed instrument, looking like a piano, but whose tones were induced by plucking the strings, not striking them. It made a tinkling noise. It figured as a piano does now both in private houses and in concerts.

[2] The Great Seal, giving official sanction to important documents, is the badge of the office of the lord chancellor.

[3] Afterwards George I.

[4] See Introduction.

[5] Referring to the party in the Anglican church which attached importance to the authority of the church and priesthood, the traditional organization and ritual, and so forth.

[6] See Introduction.

by the Queen, who had always been a Tory at heart, and who had now quarrelled with the Duchess of Marlborough, was unsuccessful. The time was not yet. The Captain General was at the height of popularity and glory. The Low Church party had a majority in Parliament. The country squires and rectors, though occasionally uttering a savage growl, were for the most part in a state of torpor, which lasted till they were roused into activity, and indeed into madness, by the persecution of Sacheverell.[1] Harley and his adherents were compelled to retire. The victory of the Whigs was complete. At the general election of 1708, their strength in the House of Commons became irresistible; and, before the end of that year, Somers was made Lord President of the Council, and Wharton[2] Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

62. Addison sat for Malmsbury in the House of Commons which was elected in 1708. But the House of Commons was not the field for him. The bashfulness of his nature made his wit and eloquence useless in debate. He once rose, but could not overcome his diffidence, and ever after remained silent. Nobody can think it strange that a great writer should fail as a speaker. But many, probably, would think it strange that Addison's failure as a speaker should have had no unfavourable effect on his success as a politician. In our time, a man of high rank and great fortune might, though speaking very little and very ill, hold a considerable post. But it would now be inconceivable that a mere adventurer, a man who, when out of office, must live by his pen, should in a few years become successively Undersecretary of State, chief Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary of State, without some oratorical talent. Addison, without high birth, and with little property, rose to a post which Dukes, the heads of

[1] See Introduction.

[2] A member of the Whig Junto. See Introduction.

the great houses of Talbot, Russell, and Bentinck,[1] have thought it an honour to fill. Without opening his lips in debate, he rose to a post, the highest that Chatham or Fox[2] ever reached. And this he did before he had been nine years in Parliament. We must look for the explanation of this seeming miracle to the peculiar circumstances in which that generation was placed. During the interval which elapsed between the time when the Censorship of the Press ceased, and the time when parliamentary proceedings began to be freely reported, literary talents were, to a public man, of much more importance, and oratorical talents of much less importance, than in our time. At present, the best way of giving rapid and wide publicity to a fact or an argument is to introduce that fact or argument into a speech made in Parliament. If a political tract were to appear superior to the Conduct of the Allies, or to the best numbers of the Freeholder, the circulation of such a tract would be languid indeed when compared with the circulation of every remarkable word uttered in the deliberations of the legislature. A speech made in the House of Commons at four in the morning is on thirty thousand tables before ten.[3] A speech made on the Monday is read on the Wednesday by multitudes in Antrim and Aberdeenshire.[4]

[1] Talbot, Lord Shrewsbury. See above, § 28. Russell, the family name of the Dukes of Bedford, a great Whig connection, furnishing many statesmen to England. Bentinck, the founder of the Portland dukedom, the companion, adviser, and agent of William III., came with him from Holland. His descendants have played a great part in English politics.

[2] Chatham (1708–1778), the elder Pitt, one of the greatest of English orators. Fox (1749–1806), the Tory orator and rival of the younger Pitt.

[3] It would be hard to state what the number of people is now who read the daily reports of a Parliamentary debate. Before another sunset the whole world reads every important speech made in Parliament.

[4] Antrim, a northern county of Ireland. Aberdeenshire, in Scotland.

The orator, by the help of a shorthand writer, has to a great extent superseded the pamphleteer. It was not so in the reign of Anne. The best speech could then produce no effect except on those who heard it. It was only by means of the press that the opinion of the public without doors could be influenced; and the opinion of the public without doors could not but be of the highest importance in a country governed by parliaments, and indeed at that time governed by triennial parliaments. The pen was therefore a more formidable political engine than the tongue. Mr. Pitt[1] and Mr. Fox contended only in Parliament. But Walpole[2] and Pulteney,[3] the Pitt and Fox of an earlier period, had not done half of what was necessary, when they sat down amidst the acclamations of the House of Commons. They had still to plead their cause before the country, and this they could do only by means of the press. Their works are now forgotten. But it is certain that there were in Grub Street[4] few more assiduous scribblers of Thoughts, Letters, Answers, Remarks, than these two great chiefs of parties. Pulteney, when leader of the Opposition, and possessed of thirty thousand a year, edited the Craftsman. Walpole, though not a man of literary habits, was the author of at least ten pamphlets, and retouched and corrected many more. These facts sufficiently show of how great importance literary assistance then was to the contending parties. St. John[5] was, certainly, in

[1] The younger Pitt (1759–1806), the most famous writer of his day, made leader of the House of Commons by his eloquence at the age of twenty-three.

[2] Sir Robert Walpole, a noted English statesman, especially remembered as prime minister of George II. (1721–1742).

[3] Pulteney (1684–1764), a prominent Whig in the reign of Queen Anne, who became Walpole's opponent in the reign of George II.

[4] A street near Moorfields, London, formerly a resort of needy writers; hence, a general term for the crowd of nameless writers for the press.

[5] Lord Bolingbroke, the friend of Pope and Swift.

Anne's reign, the best Tory speaker; Cowper[1] was probably the best Whig speaker. But it may well be doubted whether St. John did so much for the Tories as Swift, and whether Cowper did so much for the Whigs as Addison. When these things are duly considered, it will not be thought strange that Addison should have climbed higher in the state than any other Englishman has ever, by means merely of literary talents, been able to climb. Swift would, in all probability, have climbed as high, if he had not been encumbered by his cassock and his pudding sleeves.[2] As far as the homage of the great went, Swift had as much of it as if he had been Lord Treasurer.

63. To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the influence which arises from character. The world, always ready to think the worst of needy political adventurers, was forced to make one exception. Restlessness, violence, audacity, laxity of principle, are the vices ordinarily attributed to that class of men. But faction itself could not deny that Addison had, through all changes of fortune, been strictly faithful to his early opinions, and to his early friends; that his integrity was without stain; that his whole deportment indicated a fine sense of the becoming; that, in the utmost heat of controversy, his zeal was tempered by a regard for truth, humanity, and social decorum; that no outrage could ever provoke him to retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman; and that his only faults were a too sensitive delicacy, and a modesty which amounted to bashfulness.

64. He was undoubtedly one of the most popular men of his time; and much of his popularity he owed, we believe, to that very timidity which his friends lamented. That timidity often prevented him from exhibiting his talents

[1] See Introduction.

[2] Large, loose sleeves of a clergyman's gown.

to the best advantage. But it propitiated Nemesis.[1] It averted that envy which would otherwise have been excited by fame so splendid, and by so rapid an elevation. No man is so great a favourite with the public as he who is at once an object of admiration, of respect, and of pity; and such were the feelings which Addison inspired. Those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing his familiar conversation, declared with one voice that it was superior even to his writings. The brilliant Mary Montague[2] said, that she had known all the wits, and that Addison was the best company in the world. The malignant Pope was forced to own, that there was a charm in Addison's talk, which could be found nowhere else. Swift, when burning with animosity against the Whigs, could not but confess to Stella[3] that, after all, he had never known any associate so agreeable as Addison. Steele, an excellent judge of lively conversation, said, that the conversation of Addison was at once the most polite, and the most mirthful, that could be imagined; that it was Terence[4] and Catullus in one, heightened by an exquisite something which was neither Terence nor Catullus, but Addison alone. Young,[5] an excellent judge of serious conversation, said, that when Addison was at his ease, he went on in a noble strain of thought and

[1] Nemesis, the Greek goddess of retribution, who always saw to it that excessive prosperity should be counterbalanced by proportionate calamity.

[2] Lady Mary Wortley Montague (1689–1762), daughter of the Duke of Kingston, wife of the English ambassador to Constantinople, whence she wrote very diverting letters. She was a great friend of Pope.

[3] Name given by Swift to his sweetheart, Esther Johnson, to whom he wrote a most curious series of journal letters, describing his whole life from day to day.

[4] Terence (185–159 B.C.), a celebrated Roman comic poet, whose grace of style is proverbial.

[5] Edward Young (1681–1765), an English poet. His most famous work is the *Night Thoughts*.

language, so as to chain the attention of every hearer. Nor were Addison's great colloquial powers more admirable than the courtesy and softness of heart which appeared in his conversation. At the same time, it would be too much to say that he was wholly devoid of the malice which is, perhaps, inseparable from a keen sense of the ludicrous. He had one habit which both Swift and Stella applauded, and which we hardly know how to blame. If his first attempts to set a presuming dunce right were ill received, he changed his tone, "assented with civil leer,"[1] and lured the flattered coxcomb deeper and deeper into absurdity. That such was his practice we should, we think, have guessed from his works. The Tatler's criticisms on Mr. Softly's sonnet,[2] and the Spectator's dialogue with the politician who is so zealous for the honour of Lady Q—p—t—s, are excellent specimens of this innocent mischief.[3]

65. Such were Addison's talents for conversation. But his rare gifts were not exhibited to crowds or to strangers. As soon as he entered a large company, as soon as he saw an unknown face, his lips were sealed, and his manners became constrained. None who met him only in great assemblies would have been able to believe that he was the same man who had often kept a few friends listening and laughing round a table, from the time when the play ended, till the clock of St. Paul's in Covent Garden[4] struck four. Yet, even at such a table, he was not seen to the best ad-

[1] A phrase from Pope's description of Addison. See Introduction.

[2] *Tatler*, No. 163.

[3] *Spectator*, No. 568.

[4] Covent Garden, a space in London near the Strand, once a part of the convent Garden of the Westminster monks. In Addison's time it was full of coffee-houses and taverns, a favorite lounging place for the wits. It is now a great market, especially for flowers. This St. Paul's was built by Inigo Jones.

vantage. To enjoy his conversation in the highest perfection, it was necessary to be alone with him, and to hear him, in his own phrase, think aloud. "There is no such thing," he used to say, "as real conversation, but between two persons."

66. This timidity, a timidity surely neither ungraceful nor unamiable, led Addison into the two most serious faults which can with justice be imputed to him. He found that wine broke the spell which lay on his fine intellect, and was therefore too easily seduced into convivial excess. Such excess was in that age regarded, even by grave men, as the most venial of all peccadilloes, and was so far from being a mark of illbreeding that it was almost essential to the character of a fine gentleman. But the smallest speck is seen on a white ground; and almost all the biographers of Addison have said something about this failing. Of any other statesman or writer of Queen Anne's reign, we should no more think of saying that he sometimes took too much wine, than that he wore a long wig and a sword.

67. To the excessive modesty of Addison's nature, we must ascribe another fault which generally arises from a very different cause. He became a little too fond of seeing himself surrounded by a small circle of admirers, to whom he was as a King or rather as a God. All these men were far inferior to him in ability, and some of them had very serious faults. Nor did those faults escape his observation; for, if ever there was an eye which saw through and through men, it was the eye of Addison. But, with the keenest observation, and the finest sense of the ridiculous, he had a large charity. The feeling with which he looked on most of his humble companions was one of benevolence, slightly tinctured with contempt. He was at perfect ease in their company; he was grateful for their devoted attachment;

and he loaded them with benefits. Their veneration for him appears to have exceeded that with which Johnson was regarded by Boswell,[1] or Warburton by Hurd.[2] It was not in the power of adulation to turn such a head, or deprave such a heart, as Addison's. But it must in candour be admitted that he contracted some of the faults which can scarcely be avoided by any person who is so unfortunate as to be the oracle of a small literary coterie.

68. One member of this little society was Eustace Budgell, a young Templar[3] of some literature, and a distant relation of Addison. There was at this time no stain on the character of Budgell, and it is not improbable that his career would have been prosperous and honourable, if the life of his cousin had been prolonged. But, when the master was laid in the grave, the disciple broke loose from all restraint, descended rapidly from one degree of vice and misery to another, ruined his fortune by follies, attempted to repair it by crimes, and at length closed a wicked and unhappy life by selfmurder. Yet, to the last, the wretched man, gambler, lampooner, cheat, forger, as he was, retained his affection and veneration for Addison, and recorded those feelings in the last lines which he traced before he hid himself from infamy under London Bridge.

69. Another of Addison's favourite companions was Ambrose Phillipps, a good Whig and a middling poet, who had the honour of bringing into fashion a species of com-

[1] James Boswell (1740–1795), the adorer and biographer of Dr. Samuel Johnson. See Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*, and *Essay on Boswell's Johnson*.

[2] Warburton, the English bishop of Gloucester (1698–1779), author of the *Divine Legation of Moses*, a book once very famous. Bishop Hurd was his biographer and admirer. Hurd edited Addison also.

[3] A student of law, so called from having chambers in the Temple in London. This site, once occupied by the Knights Templars, is the property of the two societies of lawyers which have the right of examining candidates and "calling to the bar" of England.

position which has been called, after his name, Namby Pamby. But the most remarkable members of the little senate, as Pope long afterwards called it, were Richard Steele and Thomas Tickell.

70. Steele[1] had known Addison from childhood. They had been together at the Charter House and at Oxford; but circumstances had then, for a time, separated them widely. Steele had left college without taking a degree, had been disinherited by a rich relation, had led a vagrant life, had served in the army, had tried to find the philosopher's stone,[2] and had written a religious treatise and several comedies. He was one of those people whom it is impossible either to hate or to respect.[3] His temper was sweet, his affections warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak. His life was spent in sinning and repenting; in inculcating what was right, and doing what was wrong. In speculation, he was a man of piety and honour; in practice he was much of the rake and a little of the swindler. He was, however, so good-natured that it was not easy to be seriously angry with him, and that even rigid moralists felt more inclined to pity than to blame him, when he diced himself into a spunging[4] house or drank himself into a fever. Addison regarded Steele with kindness not unmingled with scorn, tried, with

[1] See Introduction.

[2] The "great elixir" in alchemy, which was believed to have the property of transmuting lower metals to gold. The pursuit of alchemy did not die out till the dawn of chemistry, in the seventeenth century. It was a favorite pursuit of Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony.

[3] The picture of Steele's weakness is much over-colored by Macaulay to make an antithesis to Addison's merit. Thackeray in his *English Humorists* and *Henry Esmond* has done the same thing.

[4] Another spelling of "sponging house," a place where persons arrested for debt were kept for twenty-four hours by the bailiff, or sheriff's officer, till they should pay their debts before imprisonment. The whole process is obsolete now.

little success, to keep him out of scrapes, introduced him to the great, procured a good place for him, corrected his plays, and, though by no means rich, lent him large sums of money. One of these loans appears, from a letter dated in August, 1708, to have amounted to a thousand pounds. These pecuniary transactions probably led to frequent bickerings. It is said that, on one occasion, Steele's negligence, or dishonesty, provoked Addison to repay himself by the help of a bailiff. We cannot join with Miss Aikin in rejecting this story. Johnson heard it from Savage,[1] who heard it from Steele. Few private transactions which took place a hundred and twenty years ago, are proved by stronger evidence than this. But we can by no means agree with those who condemn Addison's severity. The most amiable of mankind may well be moved to indignation, when what he has earned hardly, and lent with great inconvenience to himself, for the purpose of relieving a friend in distress, is squandered with insane profusion. We will illustrate our meaning by an example, which is not the less striking because it is taken from fiction. Dr. Harrison, in Fielding's Amelia,[2] is represented as the most benevolent of human beings; yet he takes in execution, not only the goods, but the person of his friend Booth. Dr. Harrison resorts to this strong measure because he has been informed that Booth, while pleading poverty as an excuse for not paying just debts, has been buying fine jewellery, and setting up a coach. No person who is well acquainted with Steele's life and correspondence can doubt that he behaved quite as ill to Addison as Booth was accused of behaving to Dr. Harrison. The real history, we have little doubt, was something like this:—A letter comes to Addison, imploring help in pathetic terms, and promising reformation and

[1] Richard Savage (1698–1743), a poet and friend of Johnson, who wrote his life.

[2] A famous novel by Henry Fielding, published in 1751.

speedy repayment. Poor Dick declares that he has not an inch of candle, or a bushel of coals, or credit with the butcher for a shoulder of mutton. Addison is moved. He determines to deny himself some medals which are wanting to his series of the Twelve Cæsars; to put off buying the new edition of Bayle's Dictionary[1]; and to wear his old sword and buckles another year. In this way he manages to send a hundred pounds to his friend. The next day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of gentlemen and ladies assembled. The fiddles are playing. The table is groaning under Champagne, Burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats. Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused, should send sheriff's officers to reclaim what is due to him?

71. Tickell[2] was a young man, fresh from Oxford, who had introduced himself to public notice by writing a most ingenious and graceful little poem in praise of the opera of Rosamond. He deserved, and at length attained, the first place in Addison's friendship. For a time Steele and Tickell were on good terms. But they loved Addison too much to love each other, and at length became as bitter enemies as the rival bulls in Virgil.[3]

72. At the close of 1708 Wharton became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and appointed Addison Chief Secretary. Addison was consequently under the necessity of quitting London for Dublin. Besides the chief secretaryship, which was then worth about two thousand pounds a year, he ob-

§§ 72–74. *Addison in Ireland.*

[1] Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), the great French teacher of eighteenth century scepticism, editor of a cyclopædia called *Dictionnaire historique et critique,* which was intended to embody a sceptical view of all subjects in the universe. It is said to have been always open on Addison's table.

[2] See Introduction.

[3] *Georgics,* III., 220–225.

tained a patent appointing him keeper of the Irish Records for life, with a salary of three or four hundred a year. Budgell accompanied his cousin in the capacity of private Secretary.

73. Wharton and Addison had nothing in common but Whiggism. The Lord Lieutenant was not only licentious and corrupt, but was distinguished from other libertines and jobbers by a callous impudence which presented the strongest contrast to the Secretary's gentleness and delicacy. Many parts of the Irish administration at this time appear to have deserved serious blame. But against Addison there was not a murmur. He long afterwards asserted, what all the evidence which we have ever seen tends to prove, that his diligence and integrity gained the friendship of all the most considerable persons in Ireland.

74. The parliamentary career of Addison in Ireland has, we think, wholly escaped the notice of all his biographers. He was elected member for the borough of Cavan[1] in the summer of 1709; and in the journals of two sessions his name frequently occurs. Some of the entries appear to indicate that he so far overcame his timidity as to make speeches. Nor is this by any means improbable; for the Irish House of Commons[2] was a far less formidable audience than the English House; and many tongues which were tied by fear in the greater assembly became fluent in the smaller. Gerard Hamilton,[3] for example, who, from fear of losing the fame gained by his single speech, sat mute at Westminster during forty years, spoke with great effect at Dublin when he was Secretary to Lord Halifax.

75. While Addison was in Ireland, an event occurred to which he owes his high and permanent rank among British

§§ 75–80. *The founding of the Tatler.*

[1] Cavan, a northern county in Ireland.

[2] The Irish House, which ceased to exist at the Union in 1800.

[3] He was known as "Single-speech Hamilton."

writers. As yet his fame rested on performances which, though highly respectable, were not built for duration, and which would, if he had produced nothing else, have now been almost forgotten, on some excellent Latin verses, on some English verses which occasionally rose above mediocrity, and on a book of travels, agreeably written, but not indicating any extraordinary powers of mind. These works showed him to be a man of taste, sense, and learning. The time had come when he was to prove himself a man of genius, and to enrich our literature with compositions which will live as long as the English language.

76. In the spring of 1709 Steele formed a literary project, of which he was far indeed from foreseeing the consequences. Periodical papers had during many years been published in London. Most of these were political; but in some of them questions of morality, taste, and love casuistry had been discussed. The literary merit of these works was small indeed; and even their names are now known only to the curious.

77. Steele had been appointed Gazetteer[1] by Sunderland, at the request, it is said, of Addison, and thus had access to foreign intelligence earlier and more authentic than was in those times within the reach of an ordinary newswriter. This circumstance seems to have suggested to him the scheme of publishing a periodical paper on a new plan. It was to appear on the days on which the post left London for the country, which were, in that generation, the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It was to contain the foreign news, accounts of theatrical representations, and the literary gossip of Will's and of the Grecian.[2] It was also to

[1] The three official newspapers, published in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, gave lists of government appointments, honors, and promotions as well as official news of all sorts. This Gazette now forms a part of the daily papers in London. See Macaulay's *History*, Chapter III., and *Tatler*, No. 18.

[2] See Introduction.

contain remarks on the fashionable topics of the day, compliments to beauties, pasquinades[1] on noted sharpers, and criticisms on popular preachers. The aim of Steele does not appear to have been at first higher than this. He was not ill qualified to conduct the work which he had planned. His public intelligence he drew from the best sources. He knew the town, and had paid dear for his knowledge. He had read much more than the dissipated men of that time were in the habit of reading. He was a rake[2] among scholars, and a scholar among rakes. His style was easy and not incorrect; and, though his wit and humour were of no high order, his gay animal spirits imparted to his compositions an air of vivacity which ordinary readers could hardly distinguish from comic genius. His writings have been well compared to those light wines which, though deficient in body and flavour, are yet a pleasant small drink, if not kept too long, or carried too far.

78. Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was an imaginary person, almost as well known in that age as Mr. Paul Pry[3] or Mr. Samuel Pickwick in ours. Swift had assumed the name of Bickerstaff in a satirical pamphlet against Partridge, the maker of almanacks.[4] Partridge had been fool enough to publish a furious reply. Bickerstaff had rejoined in a second pamphlet still more diverting than the first. All the wits had combined to keep up the joke, and the town was long in convulsions of laughter. Steele determined to employ the name which this controversy had made popular; and, in 1709, it was announced that Isaac

[1] Rhyming satires, published anonymously. The word is derived from a statue, named Pasquin by the Romans of the sixteenth century, on which were affixed such epigrams for popular amusement.

[2] A dissolute person of fashion. The word was much used in Addison's time.

[3] A character in a play of Poole's, very popular in Macaulay's day.

[4] Swift's joke consisted in first foretelling Partridge's death and then announcing that he was dead. Partridge kept replying angrily that he was not. The joke was carried on with much elaboration in the *Tatler*.

Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was about to publish a paper called the Tatler.

79. Addison had not been consulted about this scheme: but as soon as he heard of it, he determined to give his assistance. The effect of that assistance cannot be better described than in Steele's own words. "I fared," he said, "like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." "The paper," he says elsewhere, "was advanced indeed. It was raised to a greater thing than I intended it."

80. It is probable that Addison, when he sent across St. George's Channel his first contributions to the Tatler, had no notion of the extent and variety of his own powers. He was the possessor of a vast mine, rich with a hundred ores. But he had been acquainted only with the least precious part of his treasures, and had hitherto contented himself with producing sometimes copper and sometimes lead, intermingled with a little silver. All at once, and by mere accident, he had lighted on an inexhaustible vein of the finest gold.

81. The mere choice and arrangement of his words would have sufficed to make his essays classical. For never, not even by Dryden, not even by Temple,[1] had the English language been written with such sweetness, grace, and facility. But this was the smallest part of Addison's praise. Had he clothed his thoughts in the half French style of Horace Walpole,[2] or in the half Latin style of Dr. Johnson,

§§ 81–91. *Addison's quality as an essayist. Contrasted with Swift and Voltaire.*

[1] Sir William Temple (1628–1699), a statesman of the reign of Charles II., famous for negotiating the Triple Alliance.

[2] Horace Walpole (1717–1797), son of Sir Robert Walpole, a smart writer, elegant collector, and man of fashion. His letters and his novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, represent him to the present world.

or in the half German[1] jargon of the present day, his genius would have triumphed over all faults of manner. As a moral satirist he stands unrivalled. If ever the best Tatlers and Spectators were equalled in their own kind, we should be inclined to guess that it must have been by the lost comedies of Menander.[2]

82. In wit, properly so called, Addison was not inferior to Cowley[3] or Butler.[4] No single ode of Cowley contains so many happy analogies as are crowded into the lines to Sir Godfrey Kneller[5] and we would undertake to collect from the Spectators as great a number of ingenious illustrations as can be found in Hudibras. The still higher faculty of invention Addison possessed in still larger measure. The numerous fictions, generally original, often wild and grotesque, but always singularly graceful and happy, which are found in his essays, fully entitle him to the rank of a great poet, a rank to which his metrical compositions give him no claim. As an observer of life, of manners, of all the shades of human character, he stands in the first class. And what he observed he had the art of communicating in two widely different ways. He could describe

[1] Probably a criticism on Carlyle's English. He was at the height of his popularity in 1843.

[2] Menander (342 B.C.), the great Athenian comedy writer. Many fragments of his work remain, but no whole play.

[3] Abraham Cowley (1618–1667), the most popular poet of Milton's day; one of the great men of Macaulay's own college (Trinity College, Cambridge). He wrote many translations and imitations of classic authors, as well as English odes and prose essays. In politics he took the royalist side with Lord Falkland. Macaulay wrote a charming *Conversation between Mr. Abraham Cowley and Mr. John Milton* for *Knight's Quarterly* in 1823. Cowley enjoyed a great fame; and was thought in Milton's lifetime the greater poet of the two.

[4] Samuel Butler (1612–1680), author of *Hudibras*, a poem satirizing Puritanism, much read, and responsible for a good deal of modern imagination about the Puritans.

[5] Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), a German painter, who made many portraits in the courts of Charles II., James II., William, and Anne. He painted portraits of his fellow-members in the Kit Cat Club.

virtues, vices, habits, whims, as well as Clarendon.[1] But he could do something better. He could call human beings into existence, and make them exhibit themselves. If we wish to find anything more vivid than Addison's best portraits, we must go either to Shakspeare or to Cervantes.[2]

83. But what shall we say of Addison's humour, of his sense of the ludicrous, of his power of awakening that sense in others, and of drawing mirth from incidents which occur every day, and from little peculiarities of temper and manner, such as may be found in every man? We feel the charm: we give ourselves up to it: but we strive in vain to analyse it.

84. Perhaps the best way of describing Addison's peculiar pleasantry is to compare it with the pleasantry of some other great satirists. The three most eminent masters of the art of ridicule, during the eighteenth century, were, we conceive, Addison, Swift, and Voltaire.[3] Which of the three had the greatest power of moving laughter may be questioned. But each of them, within his own domain, was supreme.

85. Voltaire is the prince of buffoons. His merriment is without disguise or restraint. He gambols; he grins; he shakes his sides; he points the finger; he turns up the nose; he shoots out the tongue. The manner of Swift is the very opposite to this. He moves laughter, but never joins in it. He appears in his works such as he appeared in society. All the company are convulsed with merri-

[1] Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon (1608–1674), the adviser of Charles I., and Charles II., lord chancellor in 1660. He was the author of the great history of the Civil War.

[2] Cervantes (1547–1616), author of *Don Quixote*, the great Spanish classic.

[3] Voltaire, the assumed name of François Arouet, a famous French writer (1694–1778). For a further account of his character see Macaulay's *Essay on Frederic the Great.*

ment, while the Dean, the author of all the mirth, preserves an invincible gravity, and even sourness of aspect, and gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies, with the air of a man reading the commination service.

86. The manner of Addison is as remote from that of Swift as from that of Voltaire. He neither laughs out like the French wit, nor, like the Irish wit, throws a double portion of severity into his countenance while laughing inwardly; but preserves a look peculiarly his own, a look of demure serenity, disturbed only by an arch sparkle of the eye, an almost imperceptible elevation of the brow, an almost imperceptible curl of the lip. His tone is never that either of a Jack Pudding[1] or of a Cynic.[2] It is that of a gentleman, in whom the quickest sense of the ridiculous is constantly tempered by good nature and good breeding.

87. We own that the humour of Addison is, in our opinion, of a more delicious flavour than the humour of either Swift or Voltaire. Thus much, at least, is certain, that both Swift and Voltaire have been successfully mimicked, and that no man has yet been able to mimic Addison. The letter of the Abbé Coyer to Pansophe is Voltaire all over, and imposed, during a long time, on the Academicians of Paris. There are passages in Arbuthnot's[3] satirical works which we, at least, cannot distinguish from

[1] Jack-pudding, equivalent to the German *Hans Wurst*. It means a buffoon or funny man.

[2] Cynic, a Greek word meaning "dog-like," originally referring to one of a Greek school of philosophers, called "dogs," in allusion to their coarse mode of life or surly disposition. They taught that virtue consists in self-control and that pleasure is itself an evil. Hence it is a name for all persons of a captious and snarling disposition.

[3] John Arbuthnot (1667–1735), author of the *History of John Bull*, in which this nickname for Englishmen was first used.

Swift's best writing. But of the many eminent men who have made Addison their model, though several have copied his mere diction with happy effect, none has been able to catch the tone of his pleasantry. In the World, in the Connoisseur, in the Mirror, in the Lounger, there are numerous papers written in obvious imitation of his Tatlers and Spectators. Most of those papers have some merit; many are very lively and amusing; but there is not a single one which could be passed off as Addison's on a critic of the smallest perspicacity.[1]

88. But that which chiefly distinguishes Addison from Swift, from Voltaire, from almost all the other great masters of ridicule, is the grace, the nobleness, the moral purity, which we find even in his merriment. Severity, gradually hardening and darkening into misanthropy, characterizes the works of Swift. The nature of Voltaire was, indeed, not inhuman; but he venerated nothing. Neither in the masterpieces of art nor in the purest examples of virtue, neither in the Great First Cause nor in the awful enigma of the grave, could he see any thing but subjects for drollery. The more solemn and august the theme, the more monkey-like was his grimacing and chattering. The mirth of Swift is the mirth of Mephistophiles[2]; the mirth of Voltaire is the mirth of Puck.[3] If, as Soame Jenyns[4] oddly imagined, a portion of the happiness of Seraphim and just men made perfect be derived from an exquisite perception of the ludicrous, their mirth must surely be none other than the mirth of Addison; a mirth consistent with tender compassion for all that is frail, and with pro-

[1] Perspicacious means quick-sighted, keen, and is often confused by learners with perspicuous, meaning transparent, easy to see through.

[2] The cold "denying spirit" in Goethe's *Faust*.

[3] In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

[4] Soame Jenyns (1704–1787), an English essayist and theologian, much esteemed in his time.

found reverence for all that is sublime. Nothing great, nothing amiable, no moral duty, no doctrine of natural or revealed religion, has ever been associated by Addison with any degrading idea. His humanity is without a parallel in literary history. The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it. No kind of power is more formidable than the power of making men ridiculous; and that power Addison possessed in boundless measure. How grossly that power was abused by Swift and by Voltaire is well known. But of Addison it may be confidently affirmed that he has blackened no man's character, nay, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in all the volumes which he has left us a single taunt which can be called ungenerous or unkind. Yet he had detractors, whose malignity might have seemed to justify as terrible a revenge as that which men, not superior to him in genius, wreaked on Bettesworth and on Franc de Pompignan.[1] He was a politician ; he was the best writer of his party ; he lived in times of fierce excitement, in times when persons of high character and station stooped to scurrility such as is now practised only by the basest of mankind. Yet no provocation and no example could induce him to return railing for railing.

89. Of the service which his Essays rendered to morality it is difficult to speak too highly. It is true that, when the Tatler appeared, that age of outrageous profaneness and licentiousness which followed the Restoration[2] had passed away. Jeremy Collier[3] had shamed the theatres into

[1] Bettesworth, a Dublin lawyer ; de Pompignan, a French marquis : victims respectively of Swift and Voltaire.

[2] Of Charles II., in 1660. The period is extended to cover the whole reign of that king.

[3] Jeremy Collier (1650-1726), a clergyman celebrated for his effort to purify the stage. See Macaulay's *Essay on the Comic Dramatists of the Restoration.*

something which, compared with the excesses of Etherege and Wycherley,[1] might be called decency. Yet there still lingered in the public mind a pernicious notion that there was some connection between genius and profligacy, between the domestic virtues and the sullen formality of the Puritans. That error it is the glory of Addison to have dispelled. He taught the nation that the faith and the morality of Hale[2] and Tillotson[3] might be found in company with wit more sparkling than the wit of Congreve, and with humour richer than the humour of Vanbrugh.[4] So effectually, indeed, did he retort on vice the mockery which had recently been directed against virtue, that, since his time, the open violation of decency has always been considered among us as the mark of a fool. And this revolution, the greatest and most salutary ever effected by any satirist, he accomplished, be it remembered, without writing one personal lampoon.

90. In the early contributions of Addison to the Tatler his peculiar powers were not fully exhibited. Yet from the first, his superiority to all his coadjutors was evident. Some of his later Tatlers are fully equal to any thing that he ever wrote. Among the portraits, we most admire Tom Folio, Ned Softly, and the Political Upholsterer. The proceedings of the Court of Honour, the Thermometer of Zeal, the story of the Frozen Words, the Memoirs of the Shilling,[5] are excellent specimens of that ingenious

[1] Sir George Etherege (1636–1695), William Wycherley (1640–1715), both typical dramatists of the period.

[2] Sir Matthew Hale (1609–1676), lord chief justice of England in 1671, author of *Contemplations Moral and Divine.*

[3] A famous theological writer of the seventeenth century.

[4] Sir John Vanbrugh (1666–1726), an English dramatist and architect. He built Blenheim, the house of the Duke of Marlborough near Oxford.

[5] Nos. 158, 163, 250-265, 254, 249, and 220.

and lively species of fiction in which Addison excelled all men. There is one still better paper of the same class. But though that paper, a hundred and thirty-three years ago, was probably thought as edifying as one of Smalridge's[1] sermons, we dare not indicate it to the squeamish readers of the nineteenth century.

91. During the session of Parliament which commenced in November, 1709, and which the impeachment of Sacheverell has made memorable, Addison appears to have resided in London. The Tatler was now more popular than any periodical paper had ever been ; and his connection with it was generally known. It was not known, however, that almost every thing good in the Tatler was his. The truth is, that the fifty or sixty numbers which we owe to him were not merely the best, but so decidedly the best that any five of them are more valuable than all the two hundred numbers in which he had no share.

92. He required, at this time, all the solace which he could derive from literary success. The Queen had always disliked the Whigs. She had during some years disliked the Marlborough family. But, reigning by a disputed title,[2] she could not venture directly to oppose herself to a majority of both Houses of Parliament ; and, engaged as she was in a war on the event of which her own Crown was staked, she could not venture to disgrace a great and successful general. But at length, in the year 1710, the causes which had restrained her from showing her aversion to the Low Church party ceased to operate. The trial of Sacheverell[3] produced an outbreak of public feeling

§§ 92–96. *Downfall of the Whigs ; shock to Addison's fortunes.*

[1] A bishop and noted scholar of Addison's time.

[2] She was not the heir by inheritance strictly, her title depending on the Act of Parliament which settled the succession on William III., herself, and her heirs (1689).

[3] See Introduction,

scarcely less violent than the outbreaks which we can ourselves remember in 1820, and 1831.[1] The country gentlemen, the country clergymen, the rabble of the towns, were all, for once, on the same side. It was clear that, if a general election took place before the excitement abated, the Tories would have a majority. The services of Marlborough had been so splendid that they were no longer necessary. The Queen's throne was secure from all attack on the part of Lewis. Indeed, it seemed much more likely that the English and German armies would divide the spoils of Versailles and Marli[2] than that a Marshal of France would bring back the Pretender[3] to St. James's.[4] The Queen, acting by the advice of Harley, determined to dismiss her servants. In June the change commenced. Sunderland was the first who fell. The Tories exulted over his fall. The Whigs tried, during a few weeks, to persuade themselves that her Majesty had acted only from personal dislike to the Secretary, and that she meditated no further alteration. But, early in August, Godolphin was surprised by a letter from Anne, which directed him to break his white staff.[5] Even after this event, the irresolution or dissimulation of Harley kept up the hopes of the

[1] The agitations preceding Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform.

[2] The palaces of Louis XIV.

[3] The Pretender, the name of that day for James III., the son of the exiled James II., who pretended by right of birth to the English throne.

[4] St. James's Palace, built by Henry VIII., is no longer occupied by the sovereign, though it gives the official title to the English Court.

[5] The staff was a sign of authority, used in many offices in the middle ages. *Cf.* the "pastoral staff" of the bishops. To break the staff was a sign of renunciation of office, as "to give the staff" was a formal installation into office.

Compare Shakespeare, Richard II., II., 2, 59.

. . . . "The Earl of Worcester
"Hath broke his staff, resigned his stewardship."

Whigs during another month ; and then the ruin became rapid and violent. The Parliament was dissolved. The Ministers were turned out. The Tories were called to office. The tide of popularity ran violently in favour of the High Church party. That party, feeble in the late House of Commons, was now irresistible. The power which the Tories had thus suddenly acquired, they used with blind and stupid ferocity. The howl which the whole pack set up for prey and for blood appalled even him who had roused and unchained them. When, at this distance of time, we calmly review the conduct of the discarded ministers, we cannot but feel a movement of indignation at the injustice with which they were treated. No body of men had ever administered the government with more energy, ability, and moderation ; and their success had been proportioned to their wisdom. They had saved Holland and Germany. They had humbled France. They had, as it seemed, all but torn Spain from the House of Bourbon. They had made England the first power in Europe. At home they had united England and Scotland. They had respected the rights of conscience and the liberty of the subject. They retired, leaving their country at the height of prosperity and glory.[1] And yet they were pursued to their retreat by such a roar of obloquy as was never raised against the government which threw away thirteen colonies,[2] or against the government which sent a gallant army to perish in the ditches of Walcheren.[3]

93. None of the Whigs suffered more in the general wreck than Addison. He had just sustained some heavy pecuniary losses, of the nature of which we are imperfectly

[1] See Introduction,

[2] Lord North's ministry (1770–1782).

[3] The Portland ministry, 1809. The Walcheren expedition was a futile attempt to destroy the fortifications of Antwerp during the war with France.

informed, when his Secretaryship was taken from him. He had reason to believe that he should also be deprived of the small Irish office which he held by patent. He had just resigned his Fellowship. It seems probable that he had already ventured to raise his eyes to a great lady,[1] and that, while his political friends were in power, and while his own fortunes were rising, he had been, in the phrase of the romances which were then fashionable, permitted to hope. But Mr. Addison the ingenious writer, and Mr. Addison the chief Secretary, were, in her ladyship's opinion, two very different persons. All these calamities united, however, could not disturb the serene cheerfulness of a mind conscious of innocence, and rich in its own wealth. He told his friends, with smiling resignation, that they ought to admire his philosophy, that he had lost at once his fortune, his place, his fellowship, and his mistress, that he must think of turning tutor again, and yet that his spirits were as good as ever.

94. He had one consolation. Of the unpopularity which his friends had incurred, he had no share. Such was the esteem with which he was regarded that, while the most violent measures were taken for the purpose of forcing Tory members on Whig corporations, he was returned to Parliament without even a contest. Swift, who was now in London, and who had already determined on quitting the Whigs, wrote to Stella in these remarkable words: "The Tories carry it among the new members six to one. Mr. Addison's election has passed easy and undisputed; and I believe if he had a mind to be king, he would hardly be refused."

95. The good will with which the Tories regarded Addison is the more honourable to him, because it had not been purchased by any concession on his part. During the general election he published a political Journal, en-

[1] The Countess of Warwick, whom he afterwards married.

titled the Whig Examiner. Of that Journal it may be sufficient to say that Johnson, in spite of his strong political prejudices, pronounced it to be superior in wit to any of Swift's writings on the other side. When it ceased to appear, Swift, in a letter to Stella, expressed his exultation at the death of so formidable an antagonist. "He might well rejoice," says Johnson, "at the death of that which he could not have killed." "On no occasion," he adds, "was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his powers more evidently appear."

96. The only use which Addison appears to have made of the favour with which he was regarded by the Tories was to save some of his friends from the general ruin of the Whig party. He felt himself to be in a situation which made it his duty to take a decided part in politics. But the case of Steele and of Ambrose Phillipps was different. For Phillipps, Addison even condescended to solicit, with what success we have not ascertained. Steele held two places. He was Gazetteer, and he was also a Commissioner of Stamps.[1] The Gazette was taken from him.[2] But he was suffered to retain his place in the Stamp Office, on an implied understanding that he should not be active against the new government; and he was, during more than two years, induced by Addison to observe this armistice with tolerable fidelity.

[1] Not postage stamps, which of course were not yet invented, but government revenue-stamps, a means of raising taxes very popular under William and Mary, and in use throughout the eighteenth century. *Cf.* the celebrated Stamp Act of 1765, the first occasion of quarrel with the American colonies. The stamp, sometimes adhesive, sometimes embossed, was affixed by the officials to papers, parchments, legal documents, and so forth. The fees charged were given to the government. The stamp office issued the stamps and received the taxes.

[2] This place was then a government appointment under the immediate control of the secretary of state, and changing as he was changed.

97. Isaac Bickerstaff accordingly became silent upon politics, and the article of news, which had once formed about one third of his paper, altogether disappeared. The Tatler had completely changed its character. It was now nothing but a series of essays on books, morals, and manners. Steele therefore resolved to bring it to a close, and to commence a new work on an improved plan. It was announced that this new work would be published daily. The undertaking was generally regarded as bold, or rather rash ; but the event amply justified the confidence with which Steele relied on the fertility of Addison's genius. On the second of January, 1711, appeared the last Tatler. At the beginning of March following appeared the first of an incomparable series of papers, containing observations on life and literature by an imaginary Spectator.

98. The Spectator himself was conceived and drawn by Addison ; and it is not easy to doubt that the portrait was meant to be in some features a likeness of the painter. The Spectator is a gentleman who, after passing a studious youth at the university, has travelled on classic ground, and has bestowed much attention on curious points of antiquity. He has, on his return, fixed his residence in London, and has observed all the forms of life which are to be found in that great city, has daily listened to the wits of Will's, has smoked with the philosophers of the Grecian, and has mingled with the parsons at Child's, and with the politicians at the St. James's. In the morning, he often listens to the hum of the Exchange ; in the evening, his face is constantly to be seen in the pit of Drury Lane theatre. But an insurmountable bashfulness prevents him from opening his mouth, except in a small circle of intimate friends.

99. These friends were first sketched by Steele. Four of the club, the templar, the clergyman, the soldier, and

the merchant, were uninteresting figures, fit only for a background. But the other two, an old country baronet and an old town rake, though not delineated with a very delicate pencil, had some good strokes. Addison took the rude outlines into his own hands, retouched them, coloured them, and is in truth the creator of the Sir Roger de Coverley and the Will Honeycomb with whom we are all familiar.

100. The plan of the Spectator must be allowed to be both original and eminently happy. Every valuable essay in the series may be read with pleasure separately; yet the five or six hundred essays form a whole, and a whole which has the interest of a novel. It must be remembered, too, that at that time no novel, giving a lively and powerful picture of the common life and manners of England, had appeared. Richardson[1] was working as a compositor. Fielding[2] was robbing birds' nests. Smollett[3] was not yet born. The narrative, therefore, which connects together the Spectator's Essays, gave to our ancestors their first taste of an exquisite and untried pleasure. That narrative was indeed constructed with no art or labour. The events were such events as occur every day. Sir Roger comes up to town to see Eugenio, as the worthy baronet always calls Prince Eugene, goes with the Spectator on the water to Spring Gardens,[4] walks among the tombs in the Abbey,[4] and is frightened by the Mohawks,[4] but conquers his apprehen-

[1] Samuel Richardson (1689–1781), bred a printer, became the author of one of the most popular novels in English, *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded.*

[2] Henry Fielding (1707–1754), the author of *Tom Jones*, was born in Somersetshire, the son of a country gentleman.

[3] Tobias Smollett (1721–1771), born in Scotland. These are the first of the great line of English novelists, extending through two centuries in a brilliant array such as no other country can show.

[4] Spring Gardens, a place of refreshment in St. James's Park, much

sion so far as to go to the theatre when the Distressed Mother is acted. The Spectator pays a visit in the summer to Coverley Hall, is charmed with the old house, the old butler, and the old chaplain, eats a jack[1] caught by Will Wimble, rides to the assizes,[2] and hears a point of law discussed by Tom Touchy. At last a letter from the honest butler brings to the club the news that Sir Roger is dead. Will Honeycomb marries and reforms at sixty. The club breaks up; and the Spectator resigns his functions. Such events can hardly be said to form a plot; yet they are related with such truth, such grace, such wit, such humour, such pathos, such knowledge of the human heart, such knowledge of the ways of the world, that they charm us on the hundredth perusal. We have not the least doubt that if Addison had written a novel, on an extensive plan, it would have been superior to any that we possess. As it is, he is entitled to be considered not only as the greatest of the English essayists, but as the forerunner of the great English novelists.

101. We say this of Addison alone; for Addison is the Spectator. About three sevenths of the work are his; and it is no exaggeration to say, that his worst essay is as good as the best essay of any of his coadjutors. His best essays approach near to absolute perfection; nor is their excellence more wonderful than their variety. His invention never seems to flag; nor is he ever under the necessity of repeating himself, or of wearing out a subject. There are

frequented by the aristocracy of the seventeenth century. The Abbey is of course Westminster. Mohawks was a slang term for the wild young gentlemen of that time, when they sallied out in bands at night, perpetrating ruffian jokes and outrages on peaceful citizens. See § 148.

[1] A pickerel.

[2] The word means a "sitting" of legislative bodies at courts of justice; used commonly, as here, to indicate the sittings of the justices of the peace.

no dregs in his wine. He regales us after the fashion of that prodigal nabob[1] who held that there was only one good glass in a bottle. As soon as we have tasted the first sparkling foam of a jest, it is withdrawn, and a fresh draught of nectar is at our lips. On the Monday we have an allegory as lively and ingenious as Lucian's Auction of Lives[2]; on the Tuesday an Eastern apologue, as richly coloured as the Tales of Scherezade,[3] on the Wednesday, a character described with the skill of La Bruyère[4]; on the Thursday, a scene from common life, equal to the best chapters in the Vicar of Wakefield; on the Friday, some sly Horatian[5] pleasantry on fashionable follies, on hoops, patches, or puppet shows; and on the Saturday a religious meditation, which will bear a comparison with the finest passages in Massillon.[6]

102. It is dangerous to select where there is so much that deserves the highest praise. We will venture, however, to say, that any person who wishes to form a just notion of the extent and variety of Addison's powers, will do well to read at one sitting the following papers, the two Visits to the Abbey, the Visit to the Exchange, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Vision of Mirza, the Transmigrations of Pug the Monkey, and the Death of Sir Roger de Coverley.[7]

[1] Nabob, from the Hindu word for viceroy. It was applied colloquially to any Englishman who had made money in India.

[2] Lucian (240–312 A.D.), a brilliant Greek writer of dialogues and stories.

[3] The story-teller in the *Arabian Nights*.

[4] Jean de La Bruyère (1645–1696), a writer on morals. His greatest work is a series of sketches of the forms of human character, *Les Caractères*.

[5] As in the satires of Horace.

[6] A famous French preacher of the early eighteenth century.

[7] Nos. 26, 329, 69, 317, 159, 343, 517. These papers are all in the first seven volumes. The eighth must be considered as a separate work.

103. The least valuable of Addison's contributions to the Spectator are, in the judgment of our age, his critical papers. Yet his critical papers are always luminous, and often ingenious. The very worst of them must be regarded as creditable to him, when the character of the school in which he had been trained is fairly considered. The best of them were much too good for his readers. In truth, he was not so far behind our generation as he was before his own. No essays in the Spectator were more censured and derided than those in which he raised his voice against the contempt with which our fine old ballads were regarded, and showed the scoffers that the same gold which, burnished and polished, gives lustre to the Æneid and the Odes of Horace, is mingled with the rude dross of Chevy Chace.[1]

104. It is not strange that the success of the Spectator should have been such as no similar work has ever obtained. The number of copies daily distributed was at first three thousand. It subsequently increased, and had risen to near four thousand when the stamp tax was imposed. That tax was fatal to a crowd of journals. The Spectator, however, stood its ground, doubled its price, and, though its circulation fell off, still yielded a large revenue both to the state and to the authors. For particular papers, the demand was immense; of some, it is said, twenty thousand copies were required. But this was not all. To have the Spectator served up every morning with the bohea[2] and rolls, was a luxury for the few. The majority were content to wait till essays enough had appeared to form a volume. Ten thousand copies of each volume were imme-

[1] The famous old English ballad, recounting the events of the battle of Otterburn.

[2] Bohea, name of some hills in China from which tea was first imported to England in 1666. A general name in use for tea in Addison's time.

diately taken off, and new editions were called for. It must be remembered, that the population of England was then hardly a third of what it now is. The number of Englishmen who were in the habit of reading, was probably not a sixth of what it now is. A shop-keeper or a farmer who found any pleasure in literature, was a rarity. Nay, there was doubtless more than one knight of the shire whose country seat did not contain ten books, receipt books and books on farriery included. In these circumstances, the sale of the Spectator must be considered as indicating a popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens[1] in our own time.

105. At the close of 1712 the Spectator ceased to appear. It was probably felt that the shortfaced gentleman and his club had been long enough before the town; and that it was time to withdraw them, and to replace them by a new set of characters. In a few weeks the first number of the Guardian was published. But the Guardian was unfortunate both in its birth and in its death. It began in dulness, and disappeared in a tempest of faction. The original plan was bad. Addison contributed nothing till sixty-six numbers had appeared; and it was then impossible to make the Guardian what the Spectator had been. Nestor Ironside and the Miss Lizards were people to whom even he could impart no interest. He could only furnish some excellent little essays, both serious and comic; and this he did.

106. Why Addison gave no assistance to the Guardian,

§§ 106-113. *Cato.*

[1] The *Pickwick Papers*, which gave Dickens his great fame, appeared in 1837. *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Oliver Twist*, and *American Notes* had appeared before this essay was written. Scott died in 1832. Both these authors were at the height of their popularity when Macaulay wrote this.

during the first two months of its existence, is a question which has puzzled the editors and biographers, but which seems to us to admit of a very easy solution. He was then engaged in bringing his Cato on the stage.

107. The first four acts of this drama had been lying in his desk since his return from Italy. His modest and sensitive nature shrank from the risk of a public and shameful failure; and, though all who saw the manuscript were loud in praise, some thought it possible that an audience might become impatient even of very good rhetoric, and advised Addison to print the play without hazarding a representation. At length, after many fits of apprehension, the poet yielded to the urgency of his political friends, who hoped that the public would discover some analogy between the followers of Cæsar and the Tories, between Sempronius[1] and the apostate Whigs, between Cato, struggling to the last for the liberties of Rome, and the band of patriots who still stood firm round Halifax and Wharton.

108. Addison gave the play to the managers of Drury Lane theatre, without stipulating for any advantage to himself. They, therefore, thought themselves bound to spare no cost in scenery and dresses. The decorations, it is true, would not have pleased the skilful eye of Mr. Macready.[2] Juba's[3] waistcoat blazed with gold lace; Marcia's[4] hoop was worthy of a Duchess on the birthday; and Cato wore a whig worth fifty guineas. The prologue was written by Pope, and is undoubtedly a dignified and spirited composition. The part of the hero was excellently

[1] Not an historical character.

[2] William Macready (1793–1873), a noted actor, manager of the Drury Lane Theatre, when this essay was written; the Henry Irving of his day.

[3] King of Numidia in Africa, ally of Pompey; defeated at Thapsus, 46 B.C. by Cæsar. Another character in the play.

[4] Marcia, Cato's daughter.

played by Booth. Steele undertook to pack a house. The boxes were in a blaze with the stars[1] of the Peers in Opposition.[2] The pit[3] was crowded with attentive and friendly listeners from the Inns of Court[4] and the literary coffeehouses. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Governor of the Bank of England,[5] was at the head of a powerful body of auxiliaries from the city, warm[6] men and true Whigs, but better known at Jonathan's and Garraway's[7] than in the haunts of wits and critics.

109. These precautions were quite superfluous. The Tories, as a body, regarded Addison with no unkind feelings. Nor was it for their interest, professing, as they did, profound reverence for law and prescription,[8] and abhorrence both of popular insurrections and of standing armies, to appropriate to themselves reflections thrown on the great military chief[9] and demagogue, who, with the support of the legions and of the common people, subverted all the ancient institutions of his country. Accordingly, every shout that was raised by the members of the Kit Cat was echoed by the High Churchmen of the Octo-

[1] The badges of many of the honorary orders which enroll the sovereigns and nobility of the old world are shaped like stars.

[2] Nobles belonging to the party not in power. Here the phrase means the Whig Peers. A peer is one who holds one of the five degrees of nobility, duke, marquis, earl, viscount, baron.

[3] That part of the theatre on the floor of the house; in the United States, always called the parquet or orchestra.

[4] An Inn is in this sense a college building where students are taught. The Inns of Court are old corporations which have the privilege of making lawyers.

[5] See Introduction,

[6] Warm, colloquially used in Addison's time for "pretty well off," moderately rich.

[7] See Introduction,

[8] Prescription, rights at law secured by long-continued possession.

[9] Julius Cæsar, who might be supposed to typify Marlborough. See Introduction,

ber[1]; and the curtain at length fell amidst thunders of unanimous applause.

110. The delight and admiration of the town were described by the Guardian in terms which we might attribute to partiality, were it not that the Examiner, the organ of the Ministry, held similar language. The Tories, indeed, found much to sneer at in the conduct of their opponents. Steele had on this, as on other occasions, shown more zeal than taste or judgment. The honest citizens who marched under the orders of Sir Gibby,[2] as he was facetiously called, probably knew better when to buy and when to sell stock than when to clap and when to hiss at a play, and incurred some ridicule by making the hypocritical Sempronius their favourite, and by giving to his insincere rants louder plaudits than they bestowed on the temperate eloquence of Cato. Wharton, too, who had the incredible effrontery to applaud the lines about flying from prosperous vice and from the power of impious men to a private station, did not escape the sarcasms of those who justly thought that he could fly from nothing more vicious or impious than himself. The epilogue,[3] which was written by Garth,[4] a zealous Whig, was severely and not unreasonably censured as ignoble and out of place. But Addison was described, even by the bitterest Tory writers, as a gentleman of wit and virtue, in whose friendship many persons of both parties were happy, and whose name ought not to be mixed up with factious squabbles.

111. Of the jests by which the triumph of the Whig

[1] A club of extreme Tories, founded 1690, influential in the reign of Anne. See page 115, note 2, and Introduction

[2] Sir Gilbert Heathcote, mentioned in § 108.

[3] It used to be the fashion to have every new play introduced by a little poem or prologue, spoken by one of the characters, and ended by an epilogue, similarly given after the curtain.

[4] Sir Samuel Garth (1661–1719), an English physician and poet.

party was disturbed, the most severe and happy was Bolingbroke's. Between two acts, he sent for Booth to his box, and presented him, before the whole theatre, with a purse of fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual Dictator. This was a pungent allusion to the attempt which Marlborough had made, not long before his fall, to obtain a patent[1] creating him Captain General for life.

112. It was April ; and in April, a hundred and thirty years ago, the London season was thought to be far advanced. During a whole month, however, Cato was performed to overflowing houses, and brought into the treasury of the theatre twice the gains of an ordinary spring. In the summer the Drury Lane company went down to the Act[2] at Oxford, and there, before an audience which retained an affectionate remembrance of Addison's accomplishments and virtues, his tragedy was acted during several days. The gownsmen[3] began to besiege the theatre in the forenoon, and by one in the afternoon all the seats were filled.

113. About the merits of the piece which had so extraordinary an effect, the public, we suppose, has made up its mind. To compare it with the masterpieces of the Attic[4] stage, with the great English dramas of the time of Elizabeth, or even with the productions of Schiller's[5] manhood, would be absurd indeed. Yet it contains excellent dialogue and declamation, and, among plays fashioned on the French model, must be allowed to rank high ; not indeed

[1] Patent, an official document conferring a privilege.

[2] Act, the old word for the public disputations required of candidates for degrees at the universities.

[3] Gownsmen, students at the university.

[4] Athenian.

[5] Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805), the German poet, historian, and dramatist. Perhaps Macaulay refers to *Wallenstein*, *Mary Stuart*, and *William Tell*.

with Athalie, or Saul, but, we think, not below Cinna,[1] and certainly above any other English tragedy of the same school, above many of the plays of Corneille,[2] above many of the plays of Voltaire and Alfieri,[3] and above some plays of Racine. Be this as it may, we have little doubt that Cato did as much as the Tatlers, Spectators, and Freeholders united, to raise Addison's fame among his contemporaries.

114. The modesty and good nature of the successful dramatist had tamed even the malignity of faction. But literary envy, it should seem, is a fiercer passion than party spirit. It was by a zealous Whig that the fiercest attack on the Whig tragedy was made. John Dennis[4] published Remarks on Cato, which were written with some acuteness and with much coarseness and asperity. Addison neither defended himself nor retaliated. On many points he had an excellent defence; and nothing would have been easier than to retaliate; for Dennis had written bad odes, bad tragedies, bad comedies: he had, moreover, a larger share than most men of those infirmities and eccentricities which excite laughter; and Addison's power of turning either an absurd book or an absurd man into ridicule was unrivalled. Addison, however, serenely conscious of his superiority, looked with pity on his assailant, whose temper, naturally irritable and gloomy, had been soured by want, by controversy, and by literary failures.

115. But among the young candidates for Addison's favour there was one distinguished by talents from the

§§ 114–116. *The affair of John Dennis.*

[1] *Athalie* is by Racine; *Saul* by Alfieri; *Cinna* by Corneille. This odd pleasure in "ranking" and valuing authors is very characteristic of Macaulay. See above, § 101.

Pierre Corneille (1606–1684), one of the classic French dramatists. His best known work is *Le Cid.*

[3] Alfieri (1749–1803), the most famous Italian tragedian. He wrote also five odes on *American Independence.*

[4] John Dennis (1637–1734), ridiculed by Pope as a critic.

rest, and distinguished, we fear, not less by malignity and insincerity. Pope was only twenty-five.[1] But his powers had expanded to their full maturity ; and his best poem, the Rape of the Lock, had recently been published. Of his genius, Addison had always expressed high admiration. But Addison had early discerned, what might indeed have been discerned by an eye less penetrating than his, that the diminutive, crooked, sickly boy was eager to revenge himself on society for the unkindness of nature. In the Spectator, the Essay on Criticism had been praised with cordial warmth ; but a gentle hint had been added, that the writer of so excellent a poem would have done well to avoid ill-natured personalities. Pope, though evidently more galled by the censure than gratified by the praise, returned thanks for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. The two writers continued to exchange civilities, counsel, and small good offices. Addison publicly extolled Pope's miscellaneous pieces ; and Pope furnished Addison with a prologue. This did not last long. Pope hated Dennis, whom he had injured without provocation. The appearance of the Remarks on Cato gave the irritable poet an opportunity of venting his malice under the show of friendship ; and such an opportunity could not but be welcome to a nature which was implacable in enmity, and which always preferred the tortuous to the straight path. He published, accordingly, the Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis. But Pope had mistaken his powers. He was a great master of invective and sarcasm : he could dissect a character in terse and sonorous couplets, brilliant with antithesis : but of dramatic talent he was altogether destitute. If he had written a lampoon on Dennis, such as that on Atticus, or that on Sporus,[2] the old grumbler

[1] See Introduction, § 36.

[2] A name given by Pope to Lord Hervey. Atticus is Pope's name for Addison. See Introduction, § 34.

would have been crushed. But Pope writing dialogue resembled—to borrow Horace's imagery and his own—a wolf, which, instead of biting, should take to kicking, or a monkey which should try to sting. The Narrative is utterly contemptible. Of argument there is not even the show; and the jests are such as, if they were introduced into a farce, would call forth the hisses of the shilling gallery. Dennis raves about the drama; and the nurse thinks that he is calling for a dram. "There is," he cries, "no peripetia[1] in the tragedy, no change of fortune, no change at all." "Pray, good Sir, be not angry," says the old woman; "I'll fetch change." This is not exactly the pleasantry of Addison.

116. There can be no doubt that Addison saw through this officious zeal, and felt himself deeply aggrieved by it. So foolish and spiteful a pamphlet could do him no good, and, if he were thought to have any hand in it, must do him harm. Gifted with incomparable powers of ridicule, he had never, even in self defence, used those powers inhumanly or uncourteously; and he was not disposed to let others make his fame and his interests a pretext under which they might commit outrages from which he had himself constantly abstained. He accordingly declared that he had no concern in the narrative, that he disapproved of it, and that if he answered the remarks, he would answer them like a gentleman; and he took care to communicate this to Dennis. Pope was bitterly mortified; and to this transaction we are inclined to ascribe the hatred with which he ever after regarded Addison.

117. In September, 1713, the Guardian ceased to appear. Steele had gone mad about politics. A general election

§§ 117–119. *The separation of Steele and Addison. The eighth volume of the Spectator.*

[1] Peripetia, a Greek word for that part of a drama where the plot is unravelled; the modern word is *dénouement*

had just taken place : he had been chosen member for Stockbridge ; and he fully expected to play a first part in Parliament. The immense success of the Tatler and Spectator had turned his head. He had been the editor of both those papers, and was not aware how entirely they owed their influence and popularity to the genius of his friend. His spirits, always violent, were now excited by vanity, ambition, and faction, to such a pitch that he every day committed some offence against good sense and good taste. All the discreet and moderate members of his own party regretted and condemned his folly. "I am in a thousand troubles," Addison wrote, "about poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous to himself. But he has sent me word that he is determined to go on, and that any advice I may give him in this particular will have no weight with him."

118. Steele set up a political paper called the Englishman, which, as it was not supported by contributions from Addison, completely failed. By this work, by some other writings of the same kind, and by the airs which he gave himself at the first meeting of the new Parliament, he made the Tories so angry that they determined to expel him. The Whigs stood by him gallantly, but were unable to save him. The vote of expulsion was regarded by all dispassionate men as a tyrannical exercise of the power of the majority. But Steele's violence and folly, though they by no means justified the steps which his enemies took, had completely disgusted his friends ; nor did he ever regain the place which he had held in the public estimation.

119. Addison about this time conceived the design of adding an eighth volume to the Spectator. In June, 1714, the first number of the new series appeared, and during about six months three papers were published weekly. Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the Englishman and the eighth volume of the Spectator,

between Steele without Addison and Addison without Steele. The Englishman is forgotten; the eighth volume of the Spectator contains, perhaps, the finest essays, both serious and playful, in the English language.

120. Before this volume was completed, the death of Anne produced an entire change in the administration of public affairs. The blow fell suddenly. It found the Tory party distracted by internal feuds, and unprepared for any great effort. Harley had just been disgraced. Bolingbroke, it was supposed, would be the chief minister. But the Queen was on her deathbed before the white staff had been given, and her last public act was to deliver it with a feeble hand to the Duke of Shrewsbury.[1] The emergency produced a coalition between all sections of public men who were attached to the Protestant succession. George the First was proclaimed without opposition. A Council, in which the leading Whigs had seats, took the direction of affairs till the new King should arrive. The first act of the Lords Justices[2] was to appoint Addison their secretary.

121. There is an idle tradition that he was directed to prepare a letter to the King, that he could not satisfy himself as to the style of this composition, and that the Lords Justices called in a clerk who at once did what was wanted. It is not strange that a story so flattering to mediocrity should be popular; and we are sorry to deprive dunces of their consolation. But the truth must be told. It was well observed by Sir James Mackintosh,[3] whose knowledge of

§§ 120–128. *Death of Anne. Return of the Whigs to power. Addison goes into office. Conduct towards Swift and other friends.*

[1] See Introduction.

[2] Lords Justices, lords appointed to act for a time as substitutes for the sovereign in the supreme government in the whole kingdom or any part of it.

[3] Sir James Mackintosh (1765–1832) wrote a famous history of the English revolution of 1688. It was reviewed by Macaulay.

these times was unequalled, that Addison never, in any official document, affected wit or eloquence, and that his despatches are, without exception, remarkable for unpretending simplicity. Every body who knows with what ease Addison's finest essays were produced must be convinced that, if well turned phrases had been wanted, he would have had no difficulty in finding them. We are, however, inclined to believe, that the story is not absolutely without a foundation. It may well be that Addison did not know, till he had consulted experienced clerks who remembered the times when William the Third was absent on the continent, in what form a letter from the Council of Regency to the King ought to be drawn. We think it very likely that the ablest statesmen of our time, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston,[1] for example, would, in similar circumstances, be found quite as ignorant. Every office has some little mysteries which the dullest man may learn with a little attention, and which the greatest man cannot possibly know by intuition. One paper must be signed by the chief of the department; another by his deputy: to a third the royal sign manual[2] is necessary. One communication is to be registered, and another is not. One sentence must be in black ink, and another in red ink.

[1] Statesmen contemporary with the author and famous in the history of our century. Earl Russell (1792–1878), known as Lord John Russell till 1861, was the head of Macaulay's own party, the "Whigs of 1832," and lived to be Prime Minister twice, in 1846 and in 1866. His life greatly influenced the history of England of his time, especially in connection with parliamentary reform. Sir Robert Peel (1788–1850), the founder of the modern "Conservative" party, though a Tory prime minister, favored a liberal policy in regard to Catholic emancipation (1829) and free trade (1846), and carried his party with him. Lord Palmerston (1784–1865) made himself famous by supporting the revolutionary movements in Europe in 1848, bringing England out on the side of popular freedom. He also supported Napoleon III.

[2] Sign manual, autograph signature executed by a sovereign.

If the ablest Secretary for Ireland were moved to the India Board,[1] if the ablest President of the India Board were moved to the War Office, he would require instructions on points like these; and we do not doubt that Addison required such instruction when he became, for the first time, Secretary to the Lords Justices.

122. George the First took possession of his kingdom without opposition. A new ministry was formed, and a new Parliament favourable to the Whigs chosen. Sunderland[2] was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and Addison again went to Dublin as Chief Secretary.

123. At Dublin Swift resided; and there was much speculation about the way in which the Dean and the Secretary would behave towards each other. The relations which existed between these remarkable men form an interesting and pleasing portion of literary history. They had early attached themselves to the same political party and to the same patrons. While Anne's Whig ministry was in power, the visits of Swift to London and the official residence of Addison in Ireland had given them opportunities of knowing each other. They were the two shrewdest observers of their age. But their observations on each other had led them to favourable conclusions. Swift did full justice to the rare powers of conversation which were latent under the bashful deportment of Addison. Addison, on the other hand, discerned much good nature under the severe look and manner of Swift; and, indeed, the Swift of 1708 and the Swift of 1738 were two very different men.

124. But the paths of the two friends diverged widely. The Whig statesmen loaded Addison with solid benefits. They praised Swift, asked him to dinner, and did no-

[1] The India Board was a board of control established by the crown over the government of the East India Company.

[2] See Introduction,

thing more for him. His profession laid them under a difficulty. In the state they could not promote him; and they had reason to fear that, by bestowing preferment in the church on the author of the Tale of a Tub, they might give scandal to the public, which had no high opinion of their orthodoxy. He did not make fair allowance for the difficulties which prevented Halifax and Somers from serving him, thought himself an ill used man, sacrificed honour and consistency to revenge, joined the Tories, and became their most formidable champion. He soon found, however, that his old friends were less to blame than he had supposed. The dislike with which the Queen and the heads of the Church regarded him was insurmountable; and it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained an ecclesiastical dignity of no great value, on condition of fixing his residence in a country which he detested.

125. Difference of political opinion had produced, not indeed a quarrel, but a coolness between Swift and Addison. They at length ceased altogether to see each other. Yet there was between them a tacit compact like that between the hereditary guests in the Iliad.

> Ἔγχεα δ' ἀλλήλων ἀλεώμεθα καὶ δι' ὁμίλου·
> Πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ Τρῶες κλειτοί τ' ἐπίκουροι,
> Κτείνειν, ὅν κε θεὸς γε πόρῃ καὶ ποσσὶ κιχείω,
> Πολλοὶ δ' αὖ σοὶ Ἀχαιοὶ ἐναίρεμεν, ὅν κε δύνηαι.[1]

126. It is not strange that Addison, who calumniated and insulted nobody, should not have calumniated or insulted Swift. But it is remarkable that Swift, to whom

[1] The agreement of Glaucus the ally of Troy, and Diomed, the Greek, when they discovered that their fathers had been friends: "Let us avoid each other's spears hereafter in the battle; for there are many other Trojans and famous allies of theirs for me to slay, whomsoever of them God shall send, and I shall find; and on our side again there are many Greeks for you to destroy, whomsoever of them you can."—*Iliad*, VI., 226.

L. of C.

neither genius nor virtue was sacred, and who generally seemed to find, like most other renegades, a peculiar pleasure in attacking old friends, should have shown so much respect and tenderness to Addison.

127. Fortune had now changed. The accession of the House of Hanover had secured in England the liberties of the people, and in Ireland the dominion of the Protestant caste. To that caste Swift was more odious than any other man. He was hooted and even pelted in the streets of Dublin; and could not venture to ride along the strand for his health without the attendance of armed servants. Many whom he had formerly served now libelled and insulted him. At this time Addison arrived. He had been advised not to show the smallest civility to the Dean of St. Patrick's. He had answered, with admirable spirit, that it might be necessary for men whose fidelity to their party was suspected, to hold no intercourse with political opponents; but that one who had been a steady Whig in the worst times might venture, when the good cause was triumphant, to shake hands with an old friend who was one of the vanquished Tories. His kindness was soothing to the proud and cruelly wounded spirit of Swift; and the two great satirists resumed their habits of friendly intercourse.

128. Those associates of Addison whose political opinions agreed with his shared his good fortune. He took Tickell with him to Ireland. He procured for Budgell a lucrative place in the same kingdom. Ambrose Phillipps was provided for in England. Steele had injured himself so much by his eccentricity and perverseness that he obtained but a very small part of what he thought his due. He was, however, knighted; he had a place in the household; and he subsequently received other marks of favour from the court.

129. Addison did not remain long in Ireland. In 1715

he quitted his secretaryship for a seat at the Board of Trade.[1] In the same year his comedy of the Drummer was brought on the stage. The name of the author was not announced ; the piece was coldly received ; and some critics have expressed a doubt whether it were really Addison's. To us the evidence, both external and internal, seems decisive. It is not in Addison's best manner ; but it contains numerous passages which no other writer known to us could have produced. It was again performed after Addison's death, and, being known to be his, was loudly applauded.

130. Towards the close of the year 1715, while the Rebellion[2] was still raging in Scotland, Addison published the first number of a paper called the Freeholder. Among his political works the Freeholder is entitled to the first place. Even in the Spectator there are few serious papers nobler than the character of his friend Lord Somers, and certainly no satirical papers superior to those in which the Tory fox-hunter is introduced.[3] This character is the original of Squire Western,[4] and is drawn with all Fielding's force, and with a delicacy of which Fielding was altogether destitute. As none of Addison's works exhibit stronger marks of his genius than the Freeholder, so none does more honour to his moral character. It is difficult to extol too highly the candour and humanity of a political writer whom even the excitement of civil war cannot hurry into unseemly violence. Oxford, it is well known, was then the stronghold of Toryism. The High Street had been repeatedly lined with bayonets in order to keep down the disaffected gownsmen ; and traitors pursued by the messen-

[1] The English department of government controlling commerce. The head is called the president of the Board of Trade, and usually has a seat in the Cabinet.

[2] The uprising in the interest of the House of Stuart, under the Earl of Mar.

[3] See Nos. 22, 44 and 47.

[4] A character in Fielding's *Tom Jones*. See above, page 172, note 2

gers of the Government had been concealed in the garrets of several colleges. Yet the admonition which, even under such circumstances, Addison addressed to the University, is singularly gentle, respectful, and even affectionate. Indeed, he could not find it in his heart to deal harshly even with imaginary persons. His foxhunter, though ignorant, stupid, and violent, is at heart a good fellow, and is at last reclaimed by the clemency of the King. Steele was dissatisfied with his friend's moderation, and, though he acknowledged that the Freeholder was excellently written, complained that the ministry played on a lute when it was necessary to blow the trumpet. He accordingly determined to execute a flourish after his own fashion, and tried to rouse the public spirit of the nation by means of a paper called the Town Talk, which is now as utterly forgotten as his Englishman, as his Crisis, as his Letter to the Bailiff of Stockbridge, as his Reader, in short, as everything that he wrote without the help of Addison.

131. In the same year in which the Drummer was acted, and in which the first numbers of the Freeholder appeared, the estrangement of Pope and Addison became complete. Addison had from the first seen that Pope was false and malevolent. Pope had discovered that Addison was jealous. The discovery was made in a strange manner. Pope had written the Rape of the Lock, in two cantos, without supernatural machinery. These two cantos had been loudly applauded, and by none more loudly than by Addison. Then Pope thought of the Sylphs and Gnomes, Ariel, Momentilla, Crispissa, and Umbriel, and resolved to interweave the Rosicrucian[1] mythology with the original fabric. He asked

§§ 131–147. *The quarrel between Addison and Pope.*

[1] A secret society, called the "Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross," is said to have existed in the seventeenth century, possessing occult wisdom derived from the Orient, and using strange words and symbols to express it. The current accounts of the brotherhood originated perhaps in attempts at mystification, but the word Rosicrucian was used to

Addison's advice. Addison said that the poem as it stood was a delicious little thing, and entreated Pope not to run the risk of marring what was so excellent in trying to mend it. Pope afterwards declared that this insidious counsel first opened his eyes to the baseness of him who gave it.

132. Now there can be no doubt that Pope's plan was most ingenious, and that he afterwards executed it with great skill and success. But does it necessarily follow that Addison's advice was bad? And if Addison's advice was bad, does it necessarily follow that it was given from bad motives? If a friend were to ask us whether we would advise him to risk his all in a lottery of which the chances were ten to one against him, we should do our best to dissuade him from running such a risk. Even if he were so lucky as to get the thirty thousand pound prize, we should not admit that we had counselled him ill; and we should certainly think it the height of injustice in him to accuse us of having been actuated by malice. We think Addison's advice good advice. It rested on a sound principle, the result of long and wide experience. The general rule undoubtedly is that, when a successful work of imagination has been produced, it should not be recast. We cannot at this moment call to mind a single instance in which this rule has been transgressed with happy effect, except the instance of the Rape of the Lock. Tasso recast his Jerusalem.[1] Akenside[2] recast his Pleasures of the Imagination,

glorify mystical acts and theories of many societies, claiming the authority of this secret order. The "mythology" here referred to is an elaborate hierarchy of elemental spirits, which were said to be the forces, physical and spiritual, at work in the world. See Goethe's *Faust* for some dreams of this sort.

[1] Tasso (1544–1595) wrote a great poem on the crusades, called *Jerusalem Delivered*. It was published at first as a poem called *Godfrey*, and he was always revising it, in a morbid fear lest it was heretical.

[2] Mark Akenside (1721–1770), physician and poet.

and his Epistle to Curio. Pope himself, emboldened no doubt by the success with which he had expanded and remodelled the Rape of the Lock, made the same experiment on the Dunciad.[1] All these attempts failed. Who was to foresee that Pope would, once in his life, be able to do what he could not himself do twice, and what nobody else has ever done ?

133. Addison's advice was good. But had it been bad, why should we pronounce it dishonest ? Scott tells us that one of his best friends predicted the failure of Waverley. Herder[2] adjured Goethe not to take so unpromising a subject as Faust. Hume[3] tried to dissuade Robertson[4] from writing the History of Charles the Fifth. Nay, Pope himself was one of those who prophesied that Cato would never succeed on the stage, and advised Addison to print it without risking a representation. But Scott, Goethe, Robertson, Addison, had the good sense and generosity to give their advisers credit for the best intentions. Pope's heart was not of the same kind with theirs.

134. In 1715, while he was engaged in translating the Iliad, he met Addison at a coffeehouse. Phillipps and Budgell were there ; but their sovereign got rid of them, and asked Pope to dine with him alone. After dinner, Addison said that he lay under a difficulty which he wished to explain. "Tickell," he said, "translated some time ago the first book of the Iliad. I have promised to look it over and correct it. I cannot therefore ask to see yours ; for that would be double dealing." Pope made a civil re-

[1] A poem of Pope's, in imitation of the *Æneid*, about the kingdom of dulness, which he represented as peopled by many of his contemporaries.

[2] Herder (1744–1803), a German critic and poet of the classical period. His best known works are historical.

[3] Hume (1711–1776), the leader of eighteenth century philosophy in England, himself a great historian.

[4] See above, page 120, note 3.

ply, and begged that his second book might have the advantage of Addison's revision. Addison readily agreed, looked over the second book, and sent it back with warm commendations.

135. Tickell's version of the first book appeared soon after this conversation. In the preface, all rivalry was earnestly disclaimed. Tickell declared that he should not go on with the Iliad. That enterprise he should leave to powers which he admitted to be superior to his own. His only view, he said, in publishing this specimen was to bespeak the favour of the public to a translation of the Odyssey, in which he had made some progress.

136. Addison, and Addison's devoted followers, pronounced both the versions good, but maintained that Tickell's had more of the original. The town gave a decided preference to Pope's. We do not think it worth while to settle such a question of precedence. Neither of the rivals can be said to have translated the Iliad, unless, indeed, the word translation be used in the sense which it bears in the Midsummer Night's Dream. When Bottom makes his appearance with an ass's head instead of his own, Peter Quince exclaims, "Bless thee! Bottom, bless thee! thou art translated." In this sense, undoubtedly, the readers of either Pope or Tickell may very properly exclaim, "Bless thee! Homer; thou art translated indeed."

137. Our readers will, we hope, agree with us in thinking that no man in Addison's situation could have acted more fairly and kindly, both towards Pope, and towards Tickell, than he appears to have done. But an odious suspicion had sprung up in the mind of Pope. He fancied, and he soon firmly believed, that there was a deep conspiracy against his fame and his fortunes. The work on which he had staked his reputation was to be depreciated. The subscription, on which rested his hopes of a competence, was to be defeated. With this view Addison

had made a rival translation : Tickell had consented to father it ; and the wits of Button's had united to puff it.

138. Is there any external evidence to support this grave accusation ? The answer is short. There is absolutely none.

139. Was there any internal evidence which proved Addison to be the author of this version ? Was it a work which Tickell was incapable of producing? Surely not. Tickell was a Fellow of a College at Oxford, and must be supposed to have been able to construe the Iliad ; and he was a better versifier than his friend. We are not aware that Pope pretended to have discovered any turns of expression peculiar to Addison. Had such turns of expression been discovered, they would be sufficiently accounted for by supposing Addison to have corrected his friend's lines, as he owned that he had done.

140. Is there any thing in the character of the accused persons which makes the accusation probable ? We answer confidently—nothing. Tickell was long after this time described by Pope himself as a very fair and worthy man. Addison had been, during many years, before the public. Literary rivals, political opponents, had kept their eyes on him. But neither envy nor faction, in their utmost rage, had ever imputed to him a single deviation from the laws of honour and of social morality. Had he been indeed a man meanly jealous of fame, and capable of stooping to base and wicked arts for the purpose of injuring his competitors, would his vices have remained latent so long? He was a writer of tragedy: had he ever injured Rowe ? He was a writer of comedy : has he not done ample justice to Congreve, and given valuable help to Steele ? He was a pamphleteer: have not his good nature and generosity been acknowledged by Swift, his rival in fame and his adversary in politics ?

141. That Tickell should have been guilty of a villany

seems to us highly improbable. That Addison should have been guilty of a villany seems to us highly improbable. But that these two men should have conspired together to commit a villany seems to us improbable in a tenfold degree. All that is known to us of their intercourse tends to prove, that it was not the intercourse of two accomplices in crime. These are some of the lines in which Tickell poured forth his sorrow over the coffin of Addison :

> " Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
> A task well suited to thy gentle mind ?
> Oh, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
> To me thine aid, thou guardian genius, lend.
> When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
> When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
> In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
> And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
> Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
> Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more."

142. In what words, we should like to know, did this guardian genius invite his pupil to join in a plan such as the Editor of the Satirist would hardly dare to propose to the Editor of the Age ?[1]

143. We do not accuse Pope of bringing an accusation which he knew to be false. We have not the smallest doubt that he believed it to be true ; and the evidence on which he believed it he found in his own bad heart. His own life was one long series of tricks, as mean and as malicious as that of which he suspected Addison and Tickell. He was all stiletto and mask. To injure, to insult, and to save himself from the consequences of injury and insult by lying and equivocating, was the habit of his life. He published a lampoon on the Duke of Chandos ; he was taxed with it ; and he lied and equivocated. He published a lampoon on Aaron Hill[2] ; he was taxed with it ; and he

[1] Contemporary journals. [2] An obscure poet.

lied and equivocated. He published a still fouler lampoon on Lady Mary Wortley Montague; he was taxed with it; and he lied with more than usual effrontery and vehemence. He puffed himself and abused his enemies under feigned names. He robbed himself of his own letters, and then raised the hue and cry after them. Besides his frauds of malignity, of fear, of interest, and of vanity, there were frauds which he seems to have committed from love of fraud alone. He had a habit of stratagem, a pleasure in outwitting all who came near him. Whatever his object might be, the indirect road to it was that which he preferred. For Bolingbroke, Pope undoubtedly felt as much love and veneration as it was in his nature to feel for any human being. Yet Pope was scarcely dead when it was discovered that, from no motive except the mere love of artifice, he had been guilty of an act of gross perfidy to Bolingbroke.

144. Nothing was more natural than that such a man as this should attribute to others that which he felt within himself. A plain, probable, coherent explanation is frankly given to him. He is certain that it is all a romance. A line of conduct scrupulously fair, and even friendly, is pursued towards him. He is convinced that it is merely a cover for a vile intrigue by which he is to be disgraced and ruined. It is vain to ask him for proofs. He has none, and wants none, except those which he carries in his own bosom.

145. Whether Pope's malignity at length provoked Addison to retaliate for the first and last time, cannot now be known with certainty. We have only Pope's story, which runs thus. A pamphlet appeared containing some reflections which stung Pope to the quick. What those reflections were, and whether they were reflections of which he had a right to complain, we have now no means of deciding. The Earl of Warwick, a foolish and vicious lad, who

regarded Addison with the feelings with which such lads generally regard their best friends, told Pope, truly or falsely, that this pamphlet had been written by Addison's direction. When we consider what a tendency stories have to grow, in passing even from one honest man to another honest man, and when we consider that to the name of honest man neither Pope nor the Earl of Warwick had a claim, we are not disposed to attach much importance to this anecdote.

146. It is certain, however, that Pope was furious. He had already sketched the character of Atticus in prose. In his anger he turned this prose into the brilliant and energetic lines which every body knows by heart, or ought to know by heart, and sent them to Addison. One charge which Pope had enforced with great skill is probably not without foundation. Addison was, we are inclined to believe, too fond of presiding over a circle of humble friends. Of the other imputations which these famous lines are intended to convey, scarcely one has ever been proved to be just, and some are certainly false. That Addison was not in the habit of "damning with faint praise" appears from innumerable passages in his writings, and from none more than from those in which he mentions Pope. And it is not merely unjust, but ridiculous, to describe a man who made the fortune of almost every one of his intimate friends, as "so obliging that he ne'er obliged."

147. That Addison felt the sting of Pope's satire keenly, we cannot doubt. That he was conscious of one of the weaknesses with which he was reproached, is highly probable. But his heart, we firmly believe, acquitted him of the gravest part of the accusation. He acted like himself. As a satirist he was, at his own weapons, more than Pope's match; and he would have been at no loss for topics. A distorted and diseased body, tenanted by a yet more distorted and diseased mind; spite and envy thinly disguised

by sentiments as benevolent and noble as those which Sir Peter Teazle admired in Mr. Joseph Surface[1]; a feeble sickly licentiousness; an odious love of filthy and noisome images; these were things which a genius less powerful than that to which we owe the Spectator could easily have held up to the mirth and hatred of mankind. Addison had, moreover, at his command other means of vengeance which a bad man would not have scrupled to use. He was powerful in the state. Pope was a Catholic; and, in those times, a minister would have found it easy to harass the most innocent Catholic by innumerable petty vexations. Pope, near twenty years later, said that "through the lenity of the government alone he could live with comfort." "Consider," he exclaimed, "the injury that a man of high rank and credit may do to a private person, under penal laws and many other disadvantages." It is pleasing to reflect that the only revenge which Addison took was to insert in the Freeholder a warm encomium on the translation of the Iliad, and to exhort all lovers of learning to put down their names as subscribers. There could be no doubt, he said, from the specimens already published, that the masterly hand of Pope would do as much for Homer as Dryden had done for Virgil. From that time to the end of his life, he always treated Pope, by Pope's own acknowledgment, with justice. Friendship was, of course, at an end.

148. One reason which induced the Earl of Warwick to play the ignominious part of talebearer on this occasion, may have been his dislike of the marriage which was about to take place between his mother and Addison. The Countess Dowager, a daughter of the old and honourable family of the Middletons of Chirk, a family which, in any country but ours, would be called noble, resided at Hol-

§§ 148–150. *Addison's marriage.*

[1] Characters in Sheridan's *School for Scandal.*

land House.[1] Addison had, during some years, occupied at Chelsea a small dwelling, once the abode of Nell Gwynn.[2] Chelsea[3] is now a district of London, and Holland House may be called a town residence. But, in the days of Anne and George the First, milkmaids and sportsmen wandered between green hedges and over fields bright with daisies, from Kensington almost to the shore of the Thames. Addison and Lady Warwick were country neighbours, and became intimate friends. The great wit and scholar tried to allure the young Lord from the fashionable amusements of beating watchmen, breaking windows, and rolling women in hogsheads down Holborn Hill to the study of letters and the practice of virtue. These well meant exertions did little good, however, either to the disciple or to the master. Lord Warwick grew up a rake ; and Addison fell in love. The mature beauty of the Countess has been celebrated by poets in language which, after a very large allowance has been made for flattery, would lead us to believe that she was a fine woman ; and her rank doubtless heightened her attractions. The courtship was long. The hopes of the lover appear to have risen and fallen with the fortunes of his party. His attachment was at length matter of such notoriety that, when he visited Ireland for the last time, Rowe addressed some consolatory verses to the Chloe[4] of Holland House. It strikes us as a little strange that, in these verses, Addison should be called Lycidas,[5] a name of

[1] A mansion in Kensington, afterwards very famous as the residence of Lord Holland. See Macaulay's *Life*, Chapter IV., and his Letter to his sister of May 30, 1831.

[2] Mistress of Charles II.

[3] Chelsea, a suburb of London on the banks of the Thames. It has been the residence of many great people, including Steele, Swift, Addison, Walpole, and in our time Rossetti, George Eliot, and Carlyle.

[4] A shepherdess in a Greek pastoral. This name was in fashion in eighteenth century poetry.

[5] See Introduction.

singularly evil omen for a swain just about to cross St. George's Channel.

149. At length Chloe capitulated. Addison was indeed able to treat with her on equal terms. He had reason to expect preferment even higher than that which he had attained. He had inherited the fortune of a brother who died Governor of Madras. He had purchased an estate in Warwickshire, and had been welcomed to his domain in very tolerable verse by one of the neighbouring squires, the poetical foxhunter, William Somervile. In August, 1716, the newspapers announced that Joseph Addison, Esquire, famous for many excellent works both in verse and prose, had espoused the Countess Dowager of Warwick.

150. He now fixed his abode at Holland House, a house which can boast of a greater number of inmates distinguished in political and literary history than any other private dwelling in England. His portrait still hangs there. The features are pleasing; the complexion is remarkably fair; but, in the expression, we trace rather the gentleness of his disposition than the force and keenness of his intellect.

151. Not long after his marriage he reached the height of civil greatness. The Whig Government had, during some time, been torn by internal dissensions. Lord Townshend [1] led one section of the Cabinet, Lord Sunderland the other. At length, in the spring of 1717, Sunderland triumphed. Townshend retired from office, and was accompanied by Walpole and Cowper. Sunderland proceeded to reconstruct the Ministry; and Addison was appointed Secretary of State. It is certain that the Seals [2]

§ 151–159. *He enters the Cabinet as Secretary of State. Failing health. Unhappy relations with Steele.*

[1] Charles Townshend (1674–1738), a member of a family of eminence in English politics. He began as a Tory, but became a Whig.

[2] State seals, used to give official authority to documents, are usually in charge of state secretaries. Hence they are used as a symbol of official authority.

were pressed upon him, and were at first declined by him. Men equally versed in official business might easily have been found ; and his colleagues knew that they could not expect assistance from him in debate. He owed his elevation to his popularity, to his stainless probity, and to his literary fame.

152. But scarcely had Addison entered the Cabinet when his health began to fail. From one serious attack he recovered in the autumn ; and his recovery was celebrated in Latin verses, worthy of his own pen, by Vincent Bourne, who was then at Trinity College, Cambridge. A relapse soon took place ; and, in the following spring, Addison was prevented by a severe asthma from discharging the duties of his post. He resigned it, and was succeeded by his friend Craggs, a young man whose natural parts, though little improved by cultivation, were quick and showy, whose graceful person and winning manners had made him generally acceptable in society, and who, if he had lived, would probably have been the most formidable of all the rivals of Walpole.

153. As yet there was no Joseph Hume.[1] The Ministers, therefore, were able to bestow on Addison a retiring pension of fifteen hundred pounds a-year. In what form this pension was given we are not told by the biographers, and have not time to inquire. But it is certain that Addison did not vacate his seat in the House of Commons.

154. Rest of mind and body seemed to have re-established his health ; and he thanked God, with cheerful piety, for having set him free both from his office and from his asthma. Many years seemed to be before him, and he meditated many works, a tragedy on the death of Socrates, a translation of the Psalms, a treatise on the evidences of

[1] A member of Parliament in Macaulay's time, who distinguished himself by objecting to unnecessary expenditures.

Christianity. Of this last performance, a part, which we could well spare, has come down to us.

155. But the fatal complaint soon returned, and gradually prevailed against all the resources of medicine. It is melancholy to think that the last months of such a life should have been overclouded both by domestic and by political vexations. A tradition which began early, which has been generally received, and to which we have nothing to oppose, has represented his wife as an arrogant and imperious woman. It is said that, till his health failed him, he was glad to escape from the Countess Dowager and her magnificent diningroom, blazing with the gilded devices of the House of Rich,[1] to some tavern where he could enjoy a laugh, a talk about Virgil and Boileau, and a bottle of claret, with the friends of his happier days. All those friends, however, were not left to him. Sir Richard Steele had been gradually estranged by various causes. He considered himself as one who, in evil times, had braved martyrdom for his political principles, and demanded, when the Whig party was triumphant, a large compensation for what he had suffered when it was militant. The Whig leaders took a very different view of his claims. They thought that he had, by his own petulance and folly, brought them as well as himself into trouble, and though they did not absolutely neglect him, doled out favours to him with a sparing hand. It was natural that he should be angry with them, and especially angry with Addison. But what above all seems to have disturbed Sir Richard, was the elevation of Tickell, who, at thirty, was made by Addison Undersecretary of State; while the Editor of the Tatler and Spectator, the author of the Crisis, the member for Stockbridge who had been persecuted for firm adherence to the House of Hanover, was, at near fifty, forced, after many solicitations and complaints, to content himself

[1] Rich, the family name of her first husband, the Earl of Holland.

with a share in the patent[1] of Drury Lane theatre. Steele himself says, in his celebrated letter to Congreve, that Addison, by his preference of Tickell, "incurred the warmest resentment of other gentlemen;" and every thing seems to indicate that, of those resentful gentlemen, Steele was himself one.

156. While poor Sir Richard was brooding over what he considered as Addison's unkindness, a new cause of quarrel arose. The Whig party, already divided against itself, was rent by a new schism. The celebrated Bill for limiting the number of Peers had been brought in. The proud Duke of Somerset, first in rank of all the nobles whose religion permitted them to sit in Parliament, was the ostensible author of the measure. But it was supported, and, in truth, devised by the Prime Minister.

157. We are satisfied that the Bill was most pernicious; and we fear that the motives which induced Sunderland to frame it were not honourable to him. But we cannot deny that it was supported by many of the best and wisest men of that age. Nor was this strange. The royal prerogative had, within the memory of the generation then in the vigour of life, been so grossly abused,[2] that it was still regarded with a jealousy which, when the peculiar situation of the House of Brunswick is considered, may perhaps be called immoderate. The particular prerogative of creating peers had, in the opinion of the Whigs, been grossly abused by Queen Anne's last ministry[3]; and even the Tories admitted that her Majesty, in swamping, as it has

[1] Giving him a share in the profits, as the theatre was a monopoly, licensed by the government.

[2] By James II., who tried to "dispense" his officers from their obligations to the law of the land by appealing to the "royal prerogative" as above the law.

[3] In 1711 Queen Anne created twelve new peers to obtain a Tory majority in the House of Lords.

since been called, the Upper House, had done what only an extreme case could justify. The theory of the English constitution, according to many high authorities, was that three independent powers, the sovereign, the nobility, and the commons, ought constantly to act as checks on each other. If this theory were sound, it seemed to follow that to put one of these powers under the absolute control of the other two, was absurd. But if the number of peers were unlimited, it could not well be denied that the Upper House was under the absolute control of the Crown and the Commons, and was indebted only to their moderation for any power which it might be suffered to retain.

158. Steele took part with the Opposition, Addison with the Ministers. Steele, in a paper called the Plebeian, vehemently attacked the bill. Sunderland called for help on Addison, and Addison obeyed the call. In a paper called the Old Whig, he answered, and indeed refuted, Steele's arguments. It seems to us that the premises of both the controversialists were unsound, that, on those premises, Addison reasoned well and Steele ill, and that consequently Addison brought out a false conclusion while Steele blundered upon the truth. In style, in wit, and in politeness, Addison maintained his superiority, though the Old Whig is by no means one of his happiest performances.

159. At first, both the anonymous opponents observed the laws of propriety. But at length Steele so far forgot himself as to throw an odious imputation on the morals of the chiefs of the administration. Addison replied with severity, but, in our opinion, with less severity than was due to so grave an offence against morality and decorum; nor did he, in his just anger, forget for a moment the laws of good taste and good breeding. One calumny which has been often repeated, and never yet contradicted, it is our duty to expose. It is asserted in the Biographia Britannica, that Addison designated Steele as "little Dicky."

This assertion was repeated by Johnson, who had never seen the Old Whig, and was therefore excusable. It has also been repeated by Miss Aikin, who has seen the Old Whig, and for whom therefore there is less excuse. Now it is true that the words "little Dicky" occur in the Old Whig, and that Steele's name was Richard. It is equally true that the words "little Isaac" occur in the Duenna,[1] and that Newton's name was Isaac. But we confidently affirm that Addison's little Dicky had no more to do with Steele, than Sheridan's little Isaac with Newton. If we apply the words "little Dicky" to Steele, we deprive a very lively and ingenious passage, not only of all its wit, but of all its meaning.[2] Little Dicky was the nickname of Henry Norris, an actor of remarkably small stature, but of great humour, who played the usurer Gomez, then a most popular part, in Dryden's Spanish Friar.

160. The merited reproof which Steele had received, though softened by some kind and courteous expressions, galled him bitterly. He replied with little force and great acrimony; but no rejoinder appeared. Addison was fast

§§ 160–167. *Addison's death and burial.*

[1] A play of Sheridan's (1775).

[2] We will transcribe the whole paragraph. How it can ever have been misunderstood is unintelligible to us. "But our author's chief concern is for the poor House of Commons, whom he represents as naked and defenceless, when the Crown, by losing this prerogative, would be less able to protect them against the power of a House of Lords. Who forbears laughing when the Spanish Friar represents little Dicky, under the person of Gomez, insulting the Colonel that was able to fright him out of his wits with a single frown? This Gomez, says he, flew upon him like a dragon, got him down, the Devil being strong in him, and gave him bastinado on bastinado, and buffet on buffet, which the poor Colonel, being prostrate, suffered with a most Christian patience. The improbability of the fact never fails to raise mirth in the audience; and one may venture to answer for a British House of Commons, if we may guess, from its conduct hitherto, that it will scarce be either so tame or so weak as our author supposes." [*Macaulay's note.*]

hastening to his grave; and had, we may well suppose, little disposition to prosecute a quarrel with an old friend. His complaint had terminated in dropsy. He bore up long and manfully. But at length he abandoned all hope, dismissed his physicians, and calmly prepared himself to die.

161. His works he intrusted to the care of Tickell, and dedicated them a very few days before his death to Craggs, in a letter written with the sweet and graceful eloquence of a Saturday's Spectator. In this, his last composition, he alluded to his approaching end in words so manly, so cheerful, and so tender, that it is difficult to read them without tears. At the same time he earnestly recommended the interests of Tickell to the care of Craggs.

162. Within a few hours of the time at which this dedication was written, Addison sent to beg Gay,[1] who was then living by his wits about town, to come to Holland House. Gay went, and was received with great kindness. To his amazement his forgiveness was implored by the dying man. Poor Gay, the most goodnatured and simple of mankind, could not imagine what he had to forgive. There was, however, some wrong, the remembrance of which weighed on Addison's mind, and which he declared himself anxious to repair. He was in a state of extreme exhaustion; and the parting was doubtless a friendly one on both sides. Gay supposed that some plan to serve him had been in agitation at Court, and had been frustrated by Addison's influence. Nor is this improbable. Gay had paid assiduous court to the royal family. But in the Queen's days he had been the eulogist of Bolingbroke, and was still connected with many Tories. It is not strange that Addison, while heated by conflict, should have thought himself justified in obstructing the preferment of one whom he might regard

[1] John Gay (1685–1732), the English poet. The *Beggar's Opera*, his most famous work, is hardly known now; but his pastorals and fables are pleasing still.

as a political enemy. Neither is it strange that, when reviewing his whole life, and earnestly scrutinising all his motives, he should think that he had acted an unkind and ungenerous part, in using his power against a distressed man of letters, who was as harmless and as helpless as a child.

163. One inference may be drawn from this anecdote. It appears that Addison, on his deathbed, called himself to a strict account, and was not at ease till he had asked pardon for an injury which it was not even suspected that he had committed, for an injury which would have caused disquiet only to a very tender conscience. Is it not then reasonable to infer that, if he had really been guilty of forming a base conspiracy against the fame and fortunes of a rival, he would have expressed some remorse for so serious a crime? But it is unnecessary to multiply arguments and evidence for the defence, when there is neither argument nor evidence for the accusation.

164. The last moments of Addison were perfectly serene. His interview with his son-in-law is universally known. "See," he said, "how a Christian can die." The piety of Addison was, in truth, of a singularly cheerful character. The feeling which predominates in all his devotional writings is gratitude. God was to him the all-wise and allpowerful friend who had watched over his cradle with more than maternal tenderness; who had listened to his cries before they could form themselves in prayer; who had preserved his youth from the snares of vice; who had made his cup run over with worldly blessings; who had doubled the value of those blessings, by bestowing a thankful heart to enjoy them, and dear friends to partake them; who had rebuked the wave of the Ligurian gulf, had purified the autumnal air of the Campagna, and had restrained the avalanches of Mont Cenis.[1] Of the

[1] Referring to his escape from the dangers of foreign travel.

Psalms, his favourite was that which represents the Ruler of all things under the endearing image of a shepherd, whose crook guides the flock safe, through gloomy and desolate glens, to meadows well watered and rich with herbage. On that goodness to which he ascribed all the happiness of his life, he relied in the hour of death with the love which casteth out fear. He died on the seventeenth of June, 1719. He had just entered on his forty-eighth year.

165. His body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber,[1] and was borne thence to the Abbey at dead of night. The choir sang a funeral hymn. Bishop Atterbury,[2] one of those Tories who had loved and honoured the most accomplished of the Whigs, met the corpse, and led the procession by torchlight, round the shrine of Saint Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets, to the Chapel of Henry the Seventh.[3] On the north side of that Chapel, in the vault of the House of Albemarle, the coffin of Addison lies next to the coffin of Montague. Yet a few months; and the same mourners passed again along the same aisle. The same sad anthem was again chanted. The same vault was again opened; and the coffin of Craggs[4] was placed close to the coffin of Addison.

166. Many tributes were paid to the memory of Addison; but one alone is now remembered. Tickell bewailed his friend in an elegy which would do honour to the greatest name in our literature, and which unites the energy and magnificence of Dryden to the tenderness and purity of Cowper.[5] This fine poem was prefixed to a superb edi-

[1] Jerusalem Chamber, a room on the southwest side of Westminster Abbey, dating from 1376. It is hung with tapestry representing Jerusalem.

[2] Francis Atterbury (1662–1732), Dean of Westminster at this time.

[3] The eastern chapel of the Abbey.

[4] See § 152.

[5] William Cowper (1731–1800), the gentle poet whose verse still

tion of Addison's works, which was published, in 1721, by subscription. The names of the subscribers proved how widely his fame had been spread. That his countrymen should be eager to possess his writings, even in a costly form, is not wonderful. But it is wonderful that, though English literature was then little studied on the continent, Spanish Grandees,[1] Italian Prelates, Marshals of France, should be found in the list. Among the most remarkable names are those of the Queen of Sweden,[2] of Prince Eugene, of the Grand Duke of Tuscany,[3] of the Dukes of Parma, Modena, and Guastalla,[4] of the Doge of Genoa, of the Regent Orleans,[5] and of Cardinal Dubois. We ought to add that this edition, though eminently beautiful, is in some important points defective ; nor, indeed, do we yet possess a complete collection of Addison's writings.[6]

167. It is strange that neither his opulent and noble widow, nor any of his powerful and attached friends, should have thought of placing even a simple tablet, inscribed with his name, on the walls of the Abbey. It was not till

charms, even in comparison with the more magnificent poetry immediately following his death, at the end of the last century and beginning of this.

[1] The class of Spanish noblemen of the higher rank.

[2] Ulrica, sister and successor of Charles XII.

[3] The Medici family were still reigning as Grand Dukes. In 1737 the Duchy passed to the Austrian House of Hapsburg.

[4] States of Northern Italy. All these rulers, being on the English side in the War of Succession, were admirers of the English Whigs.

[5] During the minority of Louis XV. (1715–1723), Philip, Duke of Orleans, was Regent of France. He was nephew of Louis XIV., and a man of some ability, but most unscrupulous, an avowed infidel, and of dissolute life. He reversed the policy of France under Louis XIV., making a close alliance with England under George I., and cultivating the friendship of the Whigs. His favorite minister was Cardinal Dubois.

[6] The most accessible edition at present is the collection edited by Bishop Hurd, published in Bohn's Standard Library (Macmillan).

three generations had laughed and wept over his pages that the omission was supplied by the public veneration. At length, in our own time, his image, skilfully graven, appeared in Poet's Corner.[1] It represents him, as we can conceive him, clad in his dressing gown, and freed from his wig, stepping from his parlour at Chelsea into his trim little garden, with the account of the Everlasting Club, or the Loves of Hilpa and Shalum, just finished for the next day's Spectator, in his hand. Such a mark of national respect was due to the unsullied statesman, to the accomplished scholar, to the master of pure English eloquence, to the consummate painter of life and manners. It was due, above all, to the great satirist, who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit and virtue, after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism.

[1] A space on the east side of the south transept of Westminster Abbey, containing busts, statues, or tablets to the memory of many British poets and other great men. A memorial to Longfellow, the American poet, also appears here.

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